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# AN EXAMINATION OF THE CONSTRUCT VALIDITY OF THE POST-FOCUSING QUESTIONNAIRE

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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Date September 28, 1979

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my father, Robert Emmet Carey, who fed my curiosity with loving attention and of whom I am very proud.

Thank you, Dad.

## ABSTRACT

The present investigation examined the construct validity of the Post-Focusing Questionnaire (PFQ), the principal measure of Eugene T. Gendlin's concept of Focusing Ability. It is believed that such a study is an essential step toward the full explication of the nature of this self-exploratory skill and its significance in psychotherapy and personality development. In order to carry out the investigation, relevant theory and research were revieved and an integrated model of Focusing Ability was presented. This model suggests that the skill largely involves the capacity for total, absorbed attention and the ability to produce functionally useful metaphors and images. The latter component of Focusing Ability is viewed primarily as the ability to handle spatial information effectively.

Fifty-nine subjects, 45 females and 14 males, aged 18 to 24, were administered a battery of tests based on the above model and designed to assess the convergent and discriminant validity of PFQ ratings. The battery included, along with the PFQ, Tellegen's (1977) Absorption Scale and the Space Relations test (Bennett, Seashore and Wesman, 1962) as measures of the cognitive abilities hypothesized to be involved in successful focusing. Also included in the battery were measures of Verbal Comprehension and Divergent Thinking, two cognitive abilities shown to be theoretically distinct from Focusing Ability. In addition to recognized

tests of these unrelated abilities, the WAIS Vocabulary test and Hendricks, Guilford and Hoepfner's (1969) Multiple Social Problems test respectively, new judges' rating and self report measures of each were disigned for use in this study. The employment of these latter measurement techniques made for a balanced design in which three theoretically independent abilities were measured by three independent measurement methods.

The resulting 9 x 9 multitrait-multimethod matrix of correlations was examined according to Campbell and Fiske's (1959) criteria for construct validity and factor analyzed. Although no evidence of the convergent validity of PFQ ratings emerged from an initial analysis of the data, further exploratory analyses provided a tentative demonstration of construct validity for the PFQ. These findings were most readily interpretable in terms of the attentional style features of the focusing skill. It was suggested that further research is necessary to replicate these findings and more adequately assess the second or representational dimension of this therapeutically relevant client resource.

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Many people have contributed to my work, helping me translate vague ideas into plausible hypotheses. I especially want to thank Dr. Don Kuiken, my friend, who helped turn graduate work into a chance to learn rather than merely an endurance contest; Dr. Don Spearman whose telling reflections on my character have served to groom me as a professional; Dr. Harvey Zingle whose belief in my competence has been a source of encouragement in times of doubt; Dr. Leslie Greenberg whose intellectual challenge inspired me to more deeply examine the foundations of this thesis, and encouraged me to take these ideas more seriously. I also wish to thank Tore Neilson, whose enthusiasm, patience and computer skill allowed me to explore the data more thoroughly and, certainly, more enjoyably.

To my family, I offer my greatest thanks. Sometimes I wonder how we survived all the tension and disappointment earning a Ph.D. has involved. I am so very thankful to my wife, Bobbie, for her continuing support and love, despite the seemingly unending nature of this experience. "Sit down Babe. I will do it now. And Babe, you don't have to be so alone anymore." I am also very greatful for the love and understanding of my buddies: Jill, Chris and Lynne. "Bob doesn't have to go to school all the time now, gang. Do you want to play?"

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Traditional insight-oriented psychotherapies are increasingly being analyzed into component processes in an attempt to isolate their effective features. This thrust toward greater specificity has been a response to the controversy surrounding Eysenck's oft-quoted critiques of the efficacy of psychotherapy (Eysenck, 1952, 1965). Continuing dispute over the value of traditional methods frequently involves unwarranted assumptions of patient, therapist and treatment uniformity within and between various approaches (Keisler, 1966). Methodological inadequacies such as these have led reviewers like Bergin (1971, 1978) to appeal for a moratorium on broadly based studies of therapeutic effectiveness. In their place, researchers have been encouraged to examine specific interactions between treatments, therapists, clients and their presenting problems (e.g. Paul, 1967). It is expected that the findings from such investigations will enable clinicians to match more effectively particular therapeutic procedures to specific client needs and resources.

Typically, research relevant to the determination of appropriate matches has concentrated upon interactions among treatments, therapists and presenting problems. The client's contribution to the treatment process has been largely ignored. The purpose of the present research is to examine

client skills that may contribute to success or failure in one of the most widely practiced forms of insight-therapy, client-centered psychotherapy.

New developments in client-centered theory and practice (e.g. Wexler and Rice, 1974) place considerable emphasis on the client's manner of resolving problems, and the underlying cognitive skills involved in the determination of therapeutic outcome. Although theoretical descriptions vary, all derive from attempts to explain the client-centered concept of "experiencing". The term experiencing refers both to a theoretical process and a commonplace phenomenon. Experiencing is involved whenever we attempt to express something but cannot quite find the words to do so. This distinctly <u>felt</u> sense of incongruity between what we wish to express and the words we use exemplifies the phenomenon of experiencing (Hart, 1970). It demonstrates that our conceptualizations, at times, may be guided by a kind of implicit, felt meaning to which we can directly and immediately refer. In client-centered therapy, experiencing is the manner in which clients focus upon this concrete or "preconceptual experience" (Gendlin, 1961) in the construction of personal meaning. It is believed that in addition to the traditional therapist qualities of warmth, empathy and genuineness, success in client-centered therapy is dependent upon the client's experiencing skill, what Gendlin (1969, 1978) refers to as "focusing ability". The research to be presented here examined the nature of

focusing ability.

The first section of this chapter will briefly examine the concepts of experiencing and focusing ability, their history and development. In light of this discussion, a subsequent section will point out the need for increased understanding of the cognitive operations implied by these theoretical terms. In addition, it will become apparent that before sound, systematic research can be designed and implemented, it is necessary to develop a detailed model of focusing ability. Chapter II will undertake that task, and provide the framework from which the hypotheses of this investigation were derived. Experiencing in client-centered therapy and focusing ability in general will be seen as primarily a function of attentional style and imaginative resources. The chapters which follow will review relevant research and present the design, results and implications of this study.

## The Experiencing Process and Focusing Ability

As in all other insight-oriented psychotherapies, clients in client-centered therapy are encouraged to communicate their intimate thoughts, feelings and associations to the therapist in order to further the course of treatment. The client-centered therapist's role is to respond to these communications in such a way as to convey to the client additional emotional qualities and meanings

implicit in the client's message. To be effective, these interventions, frequently called "reflections of feeling" (Shlien, 1961), must help the client attend to experiences of self which may be otherwise avoided, distorted or ignored. In so doing, clients are believed to gain personal "insights" which are necessary to replace maladaptive conceptions of self (Rogers, 1951). As Gendlin (1961, p. 245) describes it,

> "An effective therapeutic response refers to what the individual is now aware of. However, it does not refer simply to his words or thoughts. Rather, it refers to the present felt datum, his present experiencing ... an effective therapeutic response thus aims to do three closely related things: (1) to refer directly and help the individual refer directly, to his present experiencing, (2) to allow him to feel this present experiencing more intensely, to grapple with it, face it, tolerate it, work it through, and (3) to help him put its implicit meaning into concepts which accurately state it."

Traditionally, it has been assumed that clients acquire the ability to directly refer to their immediate experience simply by being bathed in an atmosphere of warmth, empathy and genuineness (cf. Rogers, 1961). However, a review of research employing the Experiencing Scale seriously questions this view. The Experiencing Scale (originally developed by Gendlin and Tomlinson, 1960 and revised by Mathieu and Klein, 1970) is a content-analytical measure of the experiencing process. It has been used extensively in psychotherapy research and has been repeatedly successful in predicting client improvement (Gendlin, Jenney and Shlien,

1960; Walker, Rablen and Rogers, 1960; Tomlinson and Hart, 1962; Tomlinson and Stoler, 1967; van der Veen, 1967; Gendlin et al., 1968; Kiesler, 1971). Values on this scale reflect "levels" or degrees of client experiencing. For example, clients scoring at the lowest level on the scale typically refer to events independent of self and remote from any feelingful awareness. They tend toward impersonal, superficial and simplistic descriptions of experience. Higher level communications represent increasing attention to the here-and-now. At the highest level, client self-exploration shows consistent movement from one internal referent to another, manifesting a progressive enhancement and expansion of self-awareness. Clients appear to be altering and modifying their conceptions of self, their feelings, thoughts and actions, "as new, immediately felt nuances occur in the present experiential moment" (Klein et al., 1970, p. 10). The complete Experiencing Scale is found in Appendix E.

Gendlin et al. (1968, p. 237) analyzed Experiencing Scale (EXP) data from five studies involving 39 neurotic and 12 schizophrenic cases. In most instances outcome could be predicted from EXP level found in the first interview. In addition, despite the fact that a few clients appeared to develop their EXP level as therapy proceeded, it was the initial level of this skill rather than therapy duration which was the best predictor of the degree of EXP shown at termination. Contrary to the traditional view, the authors

did not find EXP level, or "focusing ability" as they term it, to be a function of psychotherapy at all. Instead, it actually appears to be a capacity clients bring into therapy and draw on as the situation demands. The authors suggest that clients must have some degree of focusing ability before they can benefit from client-centered therapy.

Examining the notion of focusing ability further, Gendlin and his associates reported a preliminary attempt to assess the nature of this construct. They asked independent judges to rate responses to an open-ended Postfocusing Questionnaire (PFQ) designed to assess subjects' success in following specific focusing instructions (The Focusing Manual). They found that judges' ratings significantly correlated with several of Cattell's High School Personality Questionnaire factors and differentiated between high and low scorers on Gottschalt's Hidden Figures Test. This latter finding, they note, suggests some association between focusing ability and a "field-independent" cognitive style (Witkin et al., 1962). The authors conclude that although focusing ability does not constitute healthy functioning in itself,

> "The ability to focus directly on preverbalized felt experiencing and to carry it forward with attention, with words, and with actions, does appear to be quite an important ability for psychotherapy, for personality, and for creativity."

Unfortunately, in the decade since the publication of the Gendlin et al. (1968) review, little systematic research

has been directed toward improving our understanding of focusing ability. It appears that Rogers' (1961) notion that the level of client experiencing increases as a function of therapy continues to cloud much of client-centered thinking (see for example, Hart and Tomlinson, 1970). Most client-centered investigators have failed to appreciate that the effective processing of experience is at least a result of client skill and at most a joint function of therapist skill, client resources and their mutual interaction over time (see Rice, 1973, as a notable exception to this trend). Among those who have recently investigated relevant client variables, only Zimring and his associates (Kantor and Zimring, 1976; Zimring and Balcombe, 1974) report findings directly relevant to the determination of what constitutes focusing ability and how focusing may effect personal problem-solving. They suggest that focusing ability, as measured by judges' ratings of the PFQ, is positively correlated with the degree to which one can attend to relevant stimuli and ignore distractions (Zimring and Balcombe, 1974). Through such concentrated attention, good focusers appear better able to generate a rich variety of emotional information that may "provide alternatives for exploration and development" (Kantor and Zimring, 1976).

## Statement of the Problem

Enhancement of the effectiveness of client-centered therapy may rest ultimately upon increased understanding of

the nature and function of focusing ability. However, progress in this area has been hampered by methodological problems associated with the construct validity of the Gendlin et al. (1968) measure, and the lack of an adequate model of focusing ability to guide systematic research. With respect to the former problem, there is no consistent evidence in the literature, for example, of any stable association between PFQ ratings and EXP level. More importantly, there has been no satisfactory demonstration of the convergent and discriminant validity of either of these ratings. Without such an empirical base it is impossible to design adequately controlled research on focusing ability or meaningfully interpret experimental findings in light of pressing clinical concerns. How do we know that judges' ratings of the PFQ discriminate between "good" and "poor" focusers? Is "focusing ability" a unique and distinct ability? What does this ability involve? Can it be taught as part of a preventive mental health program? These and other fundamental questions have not been adequately addressed.

The objective of this study is to investigate the convergent and discriminant validity of PFQ ratings, the principle measure of focusing ability. Such an attempt is essential as a first step toward the full explication of the nature of focusing ability and its significance in psychotherapy and personality development. In order to establish an appropriate empirical context within which to carry out the investigation, however, it is necessary to

examine the construct in greater detail.

# CHAPTER II

## FOCUSING ABILITY AND THE EXPERIENCING PROCESS: AN INTEGRATED VIEW

Experiential focusing is an emotional problem-solving skill, a means of deriving new information by directly attending to a "bodily felt" sense of one's problems. Gendlin (1969) contends that it is an essential ingredient in all successful psychotherapies, and has developed a standard "focusing manual" to guide individuals through this process. The manual consists of directions on how to attend to bodily experience in order to elicit words, images and physical sensations which assist in resolving personal difficulties. As opposed to most problem-solving strategies, focusing minimizes verbal-conceptual analysis and emphasizes an intensification of direct experiencing. To begin focusing, a person quietly attends to what "all of the problem" or "the whole situation" <u>feels</u> like internally. Thoughts about the problem are ignored or actively inhibited while one's attention turns to an actual bodily sensing of it. Subsequent instructions encourage the focuser to "let" a specific feeling, the "main thing" or "worst part" of an initial felt sense emerge and allow words or images to be associated with this central feeling. Finally, the focuser is directed to find a match between words or images and the feeling, a process which apparently facilitates a physical release of tension (Gendling 1978).

As mentioned in Chapter I, the development of the focusing manual and the concept of focusing ability have emerged directly from research with the Experiencing (EXP) Scale. Theoretically, focusing ability is an individual difference construct hypothesized to account for the relative stability of EXP ratings. As such, it is essentially a recasting of the client-centered theory of experiencing in trait-variable form. The components of the experiencing process thus suggest the dimensions by which individuals with varying degrees of focusing ability should differ from one another. To examine the focusing construct in detail, a thorough account of the theory of experiencing is in order.

The concept of experiencing, along with the principle of self-actualization, has been one of the cornerstones upon which client-centered theory and practice have been built (Wexler, 1974a). Over the past two decades numerous theoretical revisions have been offered and, currently, three distinct models of the experiencing process can be distinguished: Rogers' (1961) traditional model, Gendlin's (1961, 1964) phenomenological model, and Wexler's (1974a) information-processing model. In the first sections of this chapter each of these models will be reviewed and their implications for our understanding of focusing ability will be discussed. It will become apparent that the principal difference between these views is the degree to which they specify the cognitive operations involved in experiencing.

Increasingly, it will be shown, optimal experiencing and, by implication, focusing ability are becoming conceptualized in terms which relate to individual differences in attentional style and representational capacity. Focusing ability will be seen largely as a capacity for total, absorbed attention and the ability to produce functionally useful metaphors and images. Later sections of this chapter will review research on focusing in light of this conceptualization.

## Rogers' Traditional Model of Experiencing

The traditional view of experiencing is most clearly elaborated in Rogers' (1961) description of psychotherapeutic change. Experiencing is basically conceived as a process of becoming aware of feelings, and therapeutic progress is essentially the increased tendency to experience feelings immediately and fully. Rogers views the earlier stages of this process as involving an incongruence between feelings and awareness, while later stages consist of an increasing congruence mediated by the accurate symbolization of moment-by-moment changes in the flow of feeling. Clients are pictured as progressively moving toward a state of openness to experience wherein the "self is primarily a reflexive awareness of the process of experiencing" (Rogers, 1959).

Rogers' position hinges on his notion of "feeling" and the process by which the awareness of feeling is inhibited.

Feeling is defined as a functional unit composed of an emotionally-toned experience and its cognized meaning (Rogers, 1959). Like Freud before him, Rogers contends that such a unit may fully exist and exert influence completely independent of conscious awareness. Its unconscious status is believed to be determined primarily by the relationship between a given feeling and an individual's basic conceptions of "good" and "bad", introjected during early childhood. Contradictions between one's feelings and these introjected values, or what Rogers terms "conditions of worth", are potential sources of intense anxiety and essential threats to one's well-being.

Controlling anxiety in Rogers' view requires the intervention of defensive processes which deny or distort recognition of contradictory feelings and all related internal and external events. Only momentary lapses of defensive vigilance and/or a therapist's interpretative comments may allow clients to accurately represent these experiences. Low levels of experiencing are thus fundamentally reflections of defensive operations. Lifting defenses is tantamount to engaging high levels of experiencing or "focusing" since it presumably fosters recognition of a richness of emotional experience already fully formed somewhere outside of ordinary awareness.

The utility of the traditional model has been vastly undermined by questionable assumptions surrounding the

notion of feeling and tremendous difficulties involved in operationalizing other key concepts. As Wexler (1974a) and Gendlin (1964) point out, Rogers' position confuses the concept of feeling with emotion and raises the problem of validating constructs involving unconscious processes. Reformulating the concept of feeling and eliminating the necessity for propositions concerning unconscious events are essential to these authors' views of the experiencing process. Each of these issues will be dealt with fully later. Other of Rogers' concepts are also problematic, particularly the polar notions of open and defensive states, and to these we now turn.

The most critical limitation of Rogers' model for our purposes is the lack of a clear, concrete conceptualization of "openness to experience" (Rogers, 1959, 1961, 1963). Although this concept is frequently used in reference to a personality ideal which is a goal of client-centered therapy (Rogers, 1963), it has often been expressed in trait - variable terms representing one's characteristic level of experiencing. In this latter form it is an aspect of Rogers' (1959) theorizing which is most relevant to focusing ability. He defines the openness concept as follows:

> "... to be open to experience is the polar opposite of defensiveness. The term may be used in regard to some area of experience or in regard to the total experience of the organism. It signifies that every stimulus, whether originating within the organism or in the environment, is freely relayed through the nervous system without being distorted or channeled off by any defensive mechanism ..."

(p. 206)

The notion of defensiveness plays a pivotal role in the explanation of openness to experience, as it does in the discussion of the entire experiencing process. Unfortunately, defensiveness, too, is an inadequately developed concept in Rogers' writings and, thus, of questionable value in an investigation of focusing ability. Any attempt to define focusing ability in terms of an individual's degree of "defensiveness" inherits serious methodological problems. How, for example, can we distinguish between defensive selection in the symbolization of experience and that which is nondefensive? Rogers offers no clear basis for such a discrimination.

Wexler (1974a) has argued rather convincingly that it is impossible to distinguish between "real" feelings and those distorted by conditions of worth, making it likewise impossible to empirically demonstrate the necessary and sufficient conditions for the occurrence of defense. He and others have suggested that the notions of the "unconscious" and "defense" be discarded altogether. In a recent review of research on repression, a concept identical to Rogers' notion of defensive "denial", Holmes (1974) found that the operation of nondefensive attentional processes repeatedly provided the best explanation of laboratory findings and clinical observations. It is noteworthy, then, that Gendlin (1964), to whom we now turn, has developed a model which

abandons the concept of defense and emphasizes the manner in which one attends to and represents immediate experience.

## Gendlin's Phenomenological Model of Experiencing

Gendlin (1961, 1962, 1964) has elaborated upon the concept of experiencing in an attempt to add clarity to a phenomenological analysis of psychotherapeutic change. The model itself is based on the observation that productive moments in client-centered therapy are not marked by the dawning of intellectual understanding, but are initiated by clients making reference to feeling something they are initially unable to conceptualize. In the early phases of the experiencing process verbal symbols neither convey information nor represent feeling; they simply point to an experience. The experience itself seems to guide conceptualization. Efforts to express such feelings inevitably carries them into mutual interplay with explicit symbols, largely in the form of words, images and actions. Gendlin (1962) refers to this interaction between "felt experience" and symbolization as the "creation of meaning", and to the entire process of optimal experiencing as focusing.

Gendlin (1962, 1964, 1968) suggests that high levels of experiencing involve "direct reference" to concrete, preconceptual experience. The nature of this experience represents some sort of intense feeling process in the

individual. But unlike Rogers, Gendlin does not confuse this notion of feeling with emotion or posit any functional independence between feeling and awareness to account for its preconceptual status. Feeling for Gendlin is a much broader concept than emotion and functions in such a way as to make assumptions of unconscious dynamics unnecessary. Relying on ostensive definitions of this concept, Gendlin suggests that feeling is a complex bodily sense that accompanies every meaningful act. Specifically, it is that felt sense one may attend to when attempting to articulate the meaning of any concept or experience, regardless of whether it is emotionally toned or not. His use of the term "meaning" reflects its position in a general theory of meaning in which feeling is its bodily felt dimension of meaning. Thus, the specific bodily felt referents which define emotions are considered as only a subset within the broader class of "feelings" that characterize the meaning of experiences. Gendlin (1964, p. 123) makes this point most explicitly when examining the emotions of guilt and shame:

> "The emotions of guilt, shame, embarrassment, or feeling that I am 'bad' are about me or this aspect of my experience and its meaning to me. These emotions are not themselves the experience and its meaning to me. The emotions as such are not a direct reference to the felt experience. I must, at least momentarily, get by these emotions about it (or about myself) in order to refer directly to what all this means to me, why and what makes me feel ashamed. For example, I must say to myself: 'All right, yes, I am very ashamed; but for a minute now, although it makes me feel very ashamed, I want to sense what this is in me.'
>
> It seems quite striking and universal that we

> feel guilt, shame and badness, instead of feeling that concerning which we feel shame, guilt and badness. It is almost as if these emotions themselves preclude our feeling what it all is to us -- not so much because they are so unpleasant, as because we skip the point at which we might complete, symbolize, respond or attend to that which we centrally feel."

In addition to contrasting emotion with feeling in these passages, Gendlin alludes to the central core of felt experience, its implicit meaningfulness. Being "the body's patterned readiness for organized interaction" (Gendlin, 1964, p. 114), the concept of feeling embraces a complex sense of order and implication not found in emotion. It is this embodiment of order and implication which is believed to serve as the implicit meaning guiding a client's conceptualizations during therapeutically productive moments. As is frequently observed, clients may "feel" something very clearly while they may not "know what it is". This "something" is felt in a physical sense, yet there are no concepts to represent it. Instead, it appears to guide conceptualization by functioning as a check on the accuracy of either the client's or the therapist's attempts at understanding. For example, comparing an attempt at conceptualization with the feeling itself a client may say, "No. That's not it." Or, "That's sort of like it, but there's something more." Or finally, "Yes! That's exactly it! It makes so much sense now even though I've never thought of it like that before." It is as if the meaning had always been there, but never quite complete or adequately

symbolized. A more commonplace example of this phenomenon is the "tip of the tongue" experience, when one knows that he knows but cannot quite find the words to say what it is. Such a dependency of concepts on an inward sensing of body life demonstrates the implicit meaning function inherent in felt experience.

To further appreciate the uniqueness of Gendlin's concept of feeling, one must also distinguish the implicit meaningfulness of felt experience from what is usually referred to as "unconscious contents", or what Rogers (1959) considers as experience which is "denied to awareness". As Gendlin (1961, p. 238) explains,

> "Implicit meaning is often unconceptualized in awareness. However, the experiencing of a felt datum is conscious. Only because it is conscious can the client feel it, refer to it, talk about it, attempt to conceptualize it, and check the accuracy of his conceptualizations against it. The implicit meaning of experiencing is felt in awareness, although the many complex meanings of one such feeling may not have been conceptualized before.
>
> The many implicit meanings of a moment's experiencing are not already conceptual and then repressed. Rather we must consider these meanings to be preconceptual, aware, but as yet undifferentiated."

Although the precise nature of felt experience is difficult to determine from Gendlin's phenomenological analysis, it should be clear from the preceding paragraphs that the term is not equivalent to emotions, and excludes Rogers' "cognized meanings", memories, or any verbal or

imaginal representations. The latter phenomena are results or by-products of differentiating felt experience (Gendlin, 1964). At most, from a psychological perspective, felt experience can be considered the unique pattern of interoceptive and proprioceptive cues which characterize one's readiness for organized interaction in a given situation. Once this pattern of internal cues becomes the focus of attention, it may serve to activate the flood of associations, memories and images which are commonly believed to be the precursors of "insight" and account for the impression that repression has been lifted.

Given Gendlin's reconceptualization of the nature of feeling, there is no need to resort to psychodynamic mechanisms to explain therapeutic movement. Personality change becomes primarily an attentional matter. Rather than characterize the experiencing process as dominated by defensiveness, Gendlin (1962, p. 92) suggests that it is initially a problem of adequately allocating one's attention. Felt experience is registered and brought into interaction with explicit symbols through an attentional process termed <u>direct reference</u>. He defines direct reference as an "act of concentration" and illustrates this activity by the following example:

> "You are looking at a painting. It gives you a particular unique feeling. When you are asked to comment on the painting, you probably will attempt to state in explicit form what this unique feeling is. You may or may not succeed in formulating it. However, even in trying to do, you will give the feeling itself your

> attention. You will 'directly refer' to it as such."

Directly referring to feelings "as such" is the necessary condition for focusing and, thus, a key dimension of focusing ability. A detailed description of what ensues when an individual engages in direct reference will help to conceptualize this process. Let us begin with Gendlin's (1964, p. 115) example of a client in psychotherapy:

> "Let us say he has been discussing some troublesome situation or personal trait. He has described various events, emotions, opinions, and interpretations. Perhaps he has called himself "foolish", "unrealistic", and assured his listener that he really "knows better" than to react in the way he does. He is puzzled by his own reactions, and he disapproves of them. Or, what amounts to the same thing, he strongly defends his reactions against some real or imaginary critic who would say that the reactions make no sense, are self-defeating, unrealistic, and foolish. If he is understandingly listened to and responded to, he may be able to refer directly to the felt meaning which the matter has for him. He may then lay aside, for a moment, all his better judgment or bad feeling about the fact that he is as he is, and he may refer directly to the felt meaning of what he is talking about. He may then say something like: "Well, I know it makes no sense, but in some way it does." Or: "It's awfully vague to me what this is with me but I feel it pretty definitely."

The example suggests that direct reference is a process of total, absorbing attention. The client gradually immerses himself in the task of representing feelings <u>as such</u>. In so doing, his immediate attention is increasingly directed toward bodily felt reactions. Analytical and evaluative reflections upon these reactions, the principal distractors

from absorbed attentiveness, become less and less salient in the process. It appears that these meta-cognitions or thoughts about felt experience are actually inhibited in order to fully appreciate the complexity of bodily felt events. Gendlin (1964, 1973, 1978) implies that this stance usually improves access to affective material and, thus, amplifies felt meaning.

Although clients' attempts to "symbolize" felt meaning most commonly appear in verbal form, visual-imaginal and skeleto-motor modalities as well may play a significant role (Gendlin, 1964, 1978; Gendlin and Olsen, 1970). Once one has relaxed somewhat, quieted the internal critical/analytical chatter and directed attention simply toward a bodily felt sense of a problem, any mode of representation for "labelling" (Gendlin, 1978) the felt sense may be engaged. What appears necessary is that the focuser be able to relax control and "Let what comes from the feeling come: words, pictures, physical sensations, as long as it is from this felt sense" (Gendlin, 1978, p. 99). Thus, contrary to what Rogers' (1963) global notion of defensiveness would suggest, focusing appears to involve several specific, conscious representational modes operating on vague, but consciously felt bodily events. Focusing consists of the capacity to patiently and selectively attend to bodily felt reactions, increasingly inhibit meta-cognitions and, consequently, become totally absorbed in symbolizing the richness of felt experience through the operation of diverse representational

modalities.

Although Gendlin's view primarily emphasizes the absorbed, attentional style variable herein hypothesized to be one of the major dimensions of focusing ability, he and Olsen (Gendlin and Olsen, 1970; Olsen, 1975) have also suggested that, on the representational side, images may play a crucial role in focusing. Olsen (1975) in particular lays considerable emphasis on the power of images and, by implication, imagery ability to facilitate focusing. Unfortunately, this dimension of representational effectiveness, and the role of imagery therein, has been dealt with only briefly in Gendlin's writings.

It is our contention that both absorbed attention and, as will become clearer below, the capacity to produce images and other representational vehicles that effectively capture felt experience, are necessary components of focusing. Those who are most capable of carrying out these cognitive operations are most likely to evidence good focusing ability. As clients, they would be able to employ their own cognitive processes as a source of <u>new</u> experience, an experience so vivid and unique that it seems to provide an intensely personal standard for truth and reality.

## Wexler's Information Processing Model of Experiencing

Wexler (1974a) has extended Gendlin's analysis to more emphatically underscore the importance of attentional style

and, particularly, representational resources in the creation of personal meaning. He has completely recast the concepts of experiencing and focusing in information-processing terms. In so doing, Wexler departs significantly from both Rogers and Gendlin on the nature and role of "feeling" in therapeutic change. Relying on Schacter's (1964) theory of emotion, Wexler suggests that in and of themselves bodily states do not determine the form and therapeutic significance of feeling. Although he agrees that major personality change involves some sort of affective or feeling process, affective experience in therapy is considered to be simply a by-product of "elaborating substantive information that produces either disorganization or restructuring of the field" (Wexler, 1974a, p. 83). It is a by-product, moreover, which contains little information value. The sensory-motor features of affective states are believed to vary only as a function of arousal <u>intensity</u>, and, therefore, are of little importance in the development of personal meaning. Wexler suggests, on the basis of the research of Schacter and his associates (Schacter and Singer, 1962; Schacter and Wheeler, 1962), that clients' statements referring to a multitude of different affective states are not attempts to depict different bodily states; rather, they are attempts to understand <u>changes</u> in general bodily arousal in terms of present cognitions. "What the client 'feels' is the presence of information impinging upon him that has not been adequately organized" (Wexler, 1974a,

p. 86), not, as it were, an implicit meaning vital to self-understanding.

Although Wexler (1974a) does not specifically discuss focusing ability, he does consider the consequences of Gendlin's (1969) focusing instructions from an information processing perspective. As suggested by his theory of affective states, Wexler argues that therapeutically significant material elicited during focusing is not derived from bodily felt events but from unrefined fleeting thoughts, images and fragmentary memories evoked from long-term memory as clients momentarily confront the problems of living. He suggests that when individuals 'focus' on 'felt experience' they are basically redirecting their attentional and processing capacities away from information derived from external sources, to this array of fleeting thoughts, images and memories. Moreover, the client must scan the variety of internally evoked information held in short-term memory and allot attention to the novel and unique features of this array. When clients "feel" something that their words have not accurately captured, according to this model, they have failed to generate a structure that adequately organizes the information held in short-term store. They must then attend to information which does <u>not</u> fit their conceptualization and attempt to integrate it. It would follow that good focusers must be capable of a type of selective attention in which novelty is the selection rule.

Wexler's notion of selective attention is comparable to that derived from Gendlin's description, although Gendlin clearly emphasizes an additional attentional component not included in Wexler's model. Gendlin's view requires a kind of absorbed attentiveness which is more complex than the purely selective attention Wexler (1974a) describes. Absorbed attention assumes selectivity to a point, but further involves the progressive suspension of analytical/evaluative thought ("meta-cognitions") and relative relaxation of volitional control, operations not ordinarily associated with selective attention. As Gendlin (1978, p. 99) points out;

> "Focusing is a deliberate, controlled process up to a certain point, and then there is an equally deliberate relaxation of control ...
>
> The very word 'focusing' suggests that you are trying to make sharp what was once vague. You grope down into a feeling step by step, and you control the process to prevent yourself from drifting. 'I want to know about this feeling, not any others right now', you tell yourself. 'What's this feeling about? What's in it, what's underneath it?'. If you do find yourself drifting, rein yourself back in 'Where was I just then? Ah ... yes. I was just at that stuff about guilt, or whatever it is. What is all that about? ...'
>
> Once you have made contact with something and are feeling it clearly and strongly, you drop the reins. Don't try to control what comes from it. Let what comes from the feelings come: words, pictures, physical sensations, as long as it is from this felt sense.
>
> The process might be called 'deliberate letting-go'."

While perhaps overly narrow in his conceptualization of

attentional style and focusing ability, Wexler, more than any other writer, has extensively examined the representational demands of optimal experiencing. In his model, this process consists of organizing often ignored bits of information to achieve a novel reconstruction of experience. Wexler suggests that the key to optimal experiencing is neither Rogers' notion of defensiveness nor Gendlin's direct reference to "feelings as such", but the joint working of two processes: the differentiation of personal meaning and its integration. The concept differentiation refers to the activity of attending to and elaborating particular and often novel facets of meaning evoked in one's description of experience. Integration refers to the process of synthesizing a meaning structure out of the resultant differentiations. Together these processes appear to employ the client's own representational resources as a source of "new experience", experience which promotes change and reorganization in the cognitive field.

Given the constraints of short-term memory storage, vigorous differentiation and integration appear to be accompanied by the ability to represent selected information in a clear and economical fashion. Wexler (1974a and b) suggests that processing restrictions in this area call for the use of vivid thought forms such as metaphor and imagery in order to handle information efficiently. Being rich in their range of connotations and associations, metaphors and images are useful in integrating information quickly and

providing an evocative vehicle for further processing. Good focusers should thus be more likely than poor focusers to employ these thought forms. Indeed, the manner in which diverse representational modalities appeared to operate in Gendlin's (1962, 1964, 1978) examples of experiential focusing may in large part depend upon easy access to vivid metaphors and images.

One of the major assets of Wexler's reconceptualization is that it has led to an operational specification of the cognitive operations underlying high levels of experiencing. His account of optimal information processing indicates that, in addition to vivid thought forms, three other descriptive features of a client's verbal behavior are consequences of peak processing moments. These features include a fluid vocal pattern, unfamiliar verbal content and thematic unity. Vigorous differentiation and integration apparently generate an energetic vocal pattern with smooth transition between lexical units. There are few abrupt shifts in either content or the speaker's moment-to-moment involvement. Verbal content reveals elements unfamiliar to the client, and, most importantly, language forms such as metaphor and imagery are likely to be used to vividly depict the richness of internally-evoked information (Wexler, 1974b). Finally, the entire communication appears to markedly reflect the organization of a unified theme.

Of these four features, only vocal pattern and

vividness and efficiency of language forms have been investigated in studies relating to psychotherapy and personality development. Vocal patterns very similar to those in Wexler's description of optimal processing have been found by Rice and her associates (Rice, 1973; Rice and Gaylin, 1973; Rice and Wagstaff, 1967) to be a sensitive index of productive client involvement and good prognosis. Such a "focused voice quality" in conjunction with an active stance toward articulating subjective reactions appeared more frequently in those clients most successful and least likely to terminate therapy (Rice and Wagstaff, 1967). These investigators look to affective and motivational variables to account for their findings. Consistent with a stimulus seeking model of self-actualization (Butler and Rice, 1963), they suggest that voice quality is a consequence of the arousing and rewarding properties of different thought processes. An animated and energetic vocal pattern may represent the client's immediate involvement in seeking out and generating new experience.

In a recent study of self-actualization, Wexler (1974b) argued that vocal pattern is merely a sign of underlying cognitive processes. He contends that it is the specific operations of differentiation and integration and their representational vehicles which effect the "creation of new experience" responsible for both therapeutic productivity and self-actualization. Consistent with this hypothesis, Wexler found focused voice quality to be correlated with

additional variables theoretically involved in vigorous processing of emotional experience. These variables included, among other things, measures of differentiation and integration and the use of metaphor and imagery. All demonstrated a strong positive association with focused voice quality in the descriptions of emotional experience. Although unrelated to verbal intelligence, the specific cognitive operations and vivid thought forms were also positively correlated with degree of self-actualization determined by scores on Shostrom's (1966) Personal Orientation Inventory. These findings suggest that Wexler's information processing model shows promise as a means of explicating the focusing process, and further indicates that the ability to generate functionally useful imagery may be an important dimension of focusing ability.

## Focusing Ability: An Integrated View

The substantive theoretical differences between Wexler and Gendlin involve perennial philosophical problems regarding the "meaning of meaning" and an enduring psychological debate as to whether different "feelings" result from distinctly different body states (cf. Arnold, 1960, 1970; Tomkins, 1963; Schacter, 1964; Izard, 1977). Aside from the philosophical issues separating them, each author has adopted diametrically opposed positions on the role of sensory-motor events in the determination of affective states and processes. Wexler, as we have seen,

contends that the sensory-motor features of affective states contain little information value and, thus, contribute little to the creation of personal meaning. Gendlin, on the other hand, asserts that a host of "implicit meanings" reside in bodily felt experience, and that it is one's attention to and representation of these facets of experience that promotes therapeutic change.

Recent theories and research on emotion (Tomkins, 1962, 1963; Schwartz et al., 1976a, 1976b; Izard, 1977) lend some support to Gendlin's side of the controversy. They suggest that the experience of emotion is based, in part, on the specific pattern of internal information arising from facial and bodily expressions of emotion. Schwartz et al. (1976a, 1976b) have shown that even subtle, covert proprioceptive patterns are associated with different affective states, and that attention directed toward the experiencing of these states enhances the differentiation between respective patterns. Despite Gendlin's (1973, 1978) disclaimer that "felt experience" is neither emotion nor simply the sensing of one's musculature, his examples and these findings suggest that the differentiation of bodily felt events includes a significant kinesthetic component. It is our contention that what clients attend to during focusing is, to a considerable extent, subtle variations of proprioceptive feedback. Whatever else the direct referent of focusing may be, it is basically the "whole sense" of one's action preparedness in a given situation (cf. Gendlin,

1964). It appears to be a kind of primitive meaning-in-action which is represented by motoric images that guide behavior (Olsen, 1975), and change as a consequence of focusing.

Whereas Wexler and Gendlin differ markedly on the role of affect in experiencing, both seem to agree that there is a crucial association between attentional style, representational resources and focusing ability. An integration of their views suggests that focusing ability reflects the capacity for total, personally absorbed attention and the functionally useful representation of experience. Absorbed attention is viewed as consisting of two essential features: the ability to focus on relevant stimuli, ignoring distractions, and the capacity to inhibit meta-cognition. The first of these features has been emphasized in the writings of both authors, while the second is derived exclusively from Gendlin's model. As we have seen, Gendlin, like Wexler, considers the selectivity of attention important, but extends his description to include a periodic suspension of any thoughts about the object of attention or the attentional act itself. It is our contention that both of these attentional components are necessary to fully commit one's representational resources to a total appreciation of the richness of concrete, bodily experience.

It is not enough, however, to simply commit one's

representational resources. As indicated by both Wexler and Gendlin representational resources may vary in the extent to which they effectively capture the complexity of felt experience. Here Wexler has most clearly pointed to the importance of vivid thought forms such as metaphors and images in effectively capturing that complexity. It is our contention that the ability to generate such functionally useful structures is the second critical dimension of focusing ability.

In the following sections of this chapter research on focusing will be reviewed. The review will summarize the state of our knowledge regarding this process and assess empirical support for the current conceptualization of focusing ability. Research most relevant to this conceptualization will be reviewed first.

## Research on Focusing Ability

Despite over a decade of interest in the focusing concept, research attempts continue to be largely exploratory. The basic research strategy is either to examine correlations between post-focusing measures and a variety of tests of individual differences or to ascertain the general effects of engaging in the focusing process. Of these attempts, few bear directly on the nature of focusing ability as it is presented here.

Although Gendlin (1969) has argued against conceiving

of focusing ability as a personality "type", he and his co-workers (Gendlin et al., 1968) have presented evidence which is consistent with the above view. Forty-seven high school students were administered the focusing manual, PFQ and Cattell High-School Personality Questionnaire (HSPQ). Ratings of the PFQ were made by a group of 11 nonpsychology, graduate students. Correlations were obtained between PFQ ratings and the 14 first-order and three second-order factors on the HSPQ. Nine of the first-order factors were significantly related to focusing ability with correlations ranging from .32 to .54 (disregarding sign). Subjects rating high on focusing ability were, in Cattell's terminology: more intelligent, self-disciplined, socially precise, persevering, undistractable, introspective, inner-directed, sensitive, indulgent of self and others, imaginative, emotionally stable, and relaxed. Focusers were also significantly less anxious than nonfocusers, as indicated by a negative correlation of .58 between PFQ ratings and the HSPQ second-order anxiety factor.

Several of these correlates of focusing ability are of particular interest in that they are consistent with the integrated conceptualization offered above. The trait undistractability, for example, unambiguously reflects the selectivity of attention referred to by both Gendlin and Wexler. A greater imaginativeness in high focusers is also clearly consistent with the superior ability to produce functionally useful metaphors and images suggested by

Wexler. In addition, several of the other traits may be understood as by-products or consequences of high levels of the composite attentional style described in our model. For example, the sensitivity of high focusers may be a direct result of the greater access to affective information that absorbed attentiveness allows. Finally, introspective, inner-directed and indulgent qualities are likely aspects of a desire for deep involvement which is probably associated with the intense personal commitment absorption demands.

Subsequent research has extended the Gendlin et al (1968) findings and offers additional support for the integrated model of focusing ability. Most of these studies, however, include a more limited range of variables and address fairly specific hypotheses about the correlates of focusing ability. One subset of studies deals with variables relevant to attentional style.

Attentional Style Variables. Zimring and Balcombe (1974) report findings which support the contention that focusing ability is related to freedom from distraction. Examining the relationship between focusing ability and selective attention, the authors correlated tests of each of these skills. Focusing ability was measured by PFQ ratings, while recognizing sentences in tachistoscopic presentations was used as a measure of selective attention. A Spearman rank-order correlation of .58 ($p<.01$) indicated that PFQ ratings were significantly associated with recognition

speed. The authors conclude that focusing ability consists in some measure of the ability to focus on relevant stimuli and ignore distractions, as would be expected from our model.

Gray (1976), in a review of unpublished focusing research, reports findings which add an intriguing dimension to the freedom from distraction hypothesis. He describes the work of Drury (1969), who compared focusing ability, presumably assessed through PFQ ratings, with performance on Witkin's Rod and Frame Test. Witkin's test is one of the measures of "field dependence", an individual difference construct related to perceptual or cognitive style (Witkin et al., 1962). The field dependent person, in contrast to his field independent counterpart, is relatively unable to discriminate discrete parts of the sensory field from the organized whole. Typically, his perceptual judgments show an overdependence on environmental sources of information and poor differentiation of internal experience. At the other extreme, the field in-dependent person characteristically experiences a strong separation between self and environment and a well articulated internal frame of reference. Witkin (1965) suggests that these perceptual modes exert a formative effect on personality development through their influence on the body concept, forms of defense and differential vulnerability to specific kinds of psychopathology.

Drury determined the relationship between focusing ability and field dependence by examining Rod and Frame performance on two separate sets of eight trials. The results indicated that focusers, as a group, performed in a distinctly flexible manner. They scored in the field dependent direction on the first trial in each set, but consistently and significantly altered their performance to become moderately field <u>independent</u> on each trial thereafter. Nonfocusers, on the other hand, tended to score at the extremes of field dependence or independence throughout. The author suggests that while focusers are moderately field independent, they function in a less rigid manner and, therefore, may be effectively open to more sources of input than nonfocusers. That is, they may be more capable of concentrating exclusive attention on either external or internal cues while ignoring "distractions" from either source. Such perceptual flexibility may enable good focuseres to readily shift their attention from one source of information to another depending upon which appears most relevant at a particular moment.

The "field" flexibility of good focusers may also allow them to shift from the selective attentiveness demanded in the initial phase of focusing to the "deliberate letting go" that Gendlin (1978) suggests is necessary during the latter phases. Although field-independent individuals possess superior selective attention (Silverman, 1970), extremely field-independent people may be too rigidly selective to be

good focusers. The field-indpendent person's orientation toward imposing structure on the perceptual field rather than "taking it 'as is'" (Witkin and Goodenough, 1976) may make the inhibition of meta-cognition, for example, very difficult. According to the integrated model, both selectivity and the capacity to inhibit meta-cognition determine the attentional style dimension of focusing ability.

Only one study provides evidence directly relevant to the integrated view of attentional style. Grey (1976) reports a study by Platt (1971) who compared the effectiveness of four focusing training conditions: mere practice, didactic training with "suggestion" of success, focusing under hypnosis and focusing immediately after hypnosis. Subjects in the didactic training and hypnosis groups were also administered the Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility (HGSHS) (Shor and Orne, 1962), and all subjects received five exposures to focusing instructions. The results indicated simple practice or repeated exposure to the focusing manual did not influence performance. Similarly, hypnosis had no effect on focusing ability, regardless of whether focusing occurred during or immediately following the trance state. Platt did find, however, that didactic training with suggestion of success significantly improved focusing. Most important for our purposes, he also found a significant, positive correlation between hypnotic susceptibility, as measured by the HGSHS,

and focusing ability.

Platt's findings are quite consistent with the conceptualization of focusing ability presented here. The study suggests that although the trance state is not optimal for focusing, there is some connection between the capacity to enter that state and focusing ability. It may be that the absorbed state of attention hypothesized to be one of the major dimensions of focusing ability is very similar to the attentional style that accounts for hypnotic susceptibility. Indeed, recent research in the area of hypnotic susceptibility supports this contention. Tellegen and Atkinson (1974), in an attempt to find a superior measure of the susceptibility construct, have developed a test, the Absorption Scale, whose features bear an extraordinary resemblance to the attentional components of focusing ability. Items on this scale generally refer to a kind of attentional object relationship the authors describe as,

> "a state of 'total attention' during which the available representational apparatus seems to be entirely dedicated to experiencing and modeling the attentional object, be it a landscape, a human being, a sound, a remembered incident, or an aspect of oneself." (p. 274; italics added).

Consistent with our conceptualization, Tellegen and Atkinson suggest that this state is the product of, among other things, the inhibition of meta-cognition, an extensive freedom from distraction and a desire for object relationships which permit deep personal involvement. Like

the PFQ, the Absorption Scale has been found to be significantly and moderately correlated with a version of the HGSHS (r = .27 to .43; Tellegen and Atkinson, 1974). In the present study the relationship between the Absorption Scale and the PFQ will be examined.

Representational Resources Variables. The capacity to attend to and become absorbed in a broad range of emotionally relevant experience is only one dimension of focusing ability. Good focusers must also be able to represent this flow of experience in an effective form if it is to be useful in personal problem-solving. Functionally useful metaphors and images, as mentioned previously, are likely the most appropriate forms of representation to serve such a function. Thus, it has been suggested that one's relative access to these representational vehicles is the second dimension of focusing ability. Although not specifically guided by this hypothesis, an additional set of studies has examined representational resources and focusing ability.

The connection between imagery and focusing was first discussed by Gendlin and Olsen (1970). They examined the effectiveness of combining imagery with focusing in a therapeutic context. Clients' descriptions of their experience indicated that imagery was a powerful force in the formation of a specific feeling. Once clients focused upon a problem and a bodily felt sense of it emerged, they

were encouraged to "let an image form" from their body sensations. They were then asked to simply sense how the image made them feel, and continue attending to that feeling as they would under ordinary focusing instructions. Reports of the subjects' experiences indicated that words and images fulfill different functions in the focusing process. Images, it seems, were most useful in the initial representation of vague complexes of problem-related sensations and subsequent evocation of more refined "feelings". Words function at a more sophisticated level to "spell out" the problem and produce a release of tension. Unfortunately, the authors did not examine the association between imagery ability and focusing.

Only two empirical studies have directly examined the connection between individual differences in imagery and focusing ability. Wack (1973) compared the structure, vividness and efficiency of subjects' visual imagery with their focusing performance. He found that the occurrence of imagery during focusing was reported "almost uniformly" among high focusers, while it was noted only irregularly in the reports of nonfocusers. Focusing ability demonstrated a significant, positive correlation with an emphasis on "pleasurable, self-satisfying indulgence in fantasy", a personality trait measured by the Imaginal Processes Inventory (Singer and Antrobus, 1970). No differences were found on the Betts vividness of mental imagery scale (Sheehan, 1967). With respect to the efficiency or

functional usefulness of imagery, however, high focusers appear to have at least a slight edge over their nonfocusing peers. Wack found a "low, but significant" correlation between scores on a spatial relations test and focusing ability.

Olsen (1975) investigated the effectiveness of an elaborate version of the technique she and Gendlin introduced (Gendlin and Olsen, 1970). This "Image Focusing" (IF) method (Appendix B), when administered in conjunction with muscle relaxation, yielded a momentary rise in EXP level. In addition, Olsen found that IF ability significantly correlated with the Betts vividness of visual imagery scale, a result which apparently contradicts Wack's original findings. A Correlation of -.42 was obtained between the Betts scale and a modified version of the Post-Focusing Checklist (PFC), a self report measure of focusing ability (Wolfe and Vanden Bos, 1970). Furthermore, a correlation of .62 was found between the Betts and an Image Focusing version of the PFQ. Olsen's revisions of these scales, referred to as the Post-Imagery Focusing Checklist (PIFC) and Post-Imagery Focusing Questionnaire (PIFQ) emphasized the production of vivid images and their connection with feelings. Interestingly, the correlation between the Betts measure and the standard PFC was not significant. Neither were significant correlations obtained between the Gordon Test of Visual Imagery Control and any of the focusing measures. Olsen concluded that the ability to

image vividly is an important component of IF ability.

On the surface, Olsen's conclusion seems quite reasonable. It would appear that in order to fruitfully engage in IF one must be able to create vivid images. Yet, does this mean that imagery vividness is a fundamental component of focusing ability? Wack's results suggest to the contrary that it is functional usefulness rather than vividness that is important. To resolve these contradictory conclusions a re-examination of Olsen's and Wack's research is in order. Both studies examined correlations with Betts' vividness scale and post-focusing measures. Wack employed standard measures (PFC, PFQ), while Olsen in addition used several newly developed instruments. Although significant correlations were found between two of these new measures (PIFC, PIFQ) and the Betts, no significant association was found <u>in either study</u> between standard or nonimagery specific measures and vividness scores. It seems that Olsen's finding reflects something specific to the Betts, PIFC and PIFQ rather than something in common with most post-focusing measures. If so, Wack's conclusion warrants additional consideration.

The relationship between the generation of images and focusing ability requires further investigation. The findings reviewed suggest, as expected from the view presented here, that imagery is a potent mediator of effective focusing and that individual differences in

imagery ability can, in part, account for differences in focusing ability. Wack's finding on this latter point is of particular interest since no effort was made in his study to emphasize the use of images during focusing. Research on imagery ability and cognition indicates that the effects of individual differences in imagery are particularly pronounced when imagery is encouraged (Ernest, 1977). Thus, it may be expected that the visualization skill assessed by the Space Relations test is a more significant contibutor to focusing ability under conditions more conducive to the use of images. In the present study the relationship between the functional usefulness of images, as measured by the Space Relations test, and focusing ability will be examined under such conditions.

The studies reviewed thus far have examined individual differences related to focusing ability in two areas of cognitive and emotional functioning: attentional style and imagery ability. Unfortunately, the relationship between the ability to produce functionally useful metaphors and focusing ability has not been investigated. In general, the results provide some support for the view presented here. A number of research efforts have also involved variables which may, according to our integrated model, be regarded as consequences of high levels of focusing ability. These studies have primarily examined the availability and use of affective information.

Affective Information Variables. It was previously suggested that focusers are more "sensitive" than their non-focusing peers (Gendlin et al, 1968) because of the greater access to affective information afforded by their absorbed attentional style. Several studies have examined variables related to this issue. Kantor and Zimring (1976) for example, provide evidence which supports the contention that focusers have greater access to affective material than nonfocusers. After being given focusing instructions followed by the PFQ, a group of undergraduates was divided into two groups on the basis of their PFQ ratings. A group of "low focusers" consisted of 24 students whose ratings indicated that they clearly "did not focus" during the instructional period. "High focusers" included 23 students whose ratings indicated some evidence of focusing ability Subjects in each group were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups, and given ten minutes to describe in writing both a general problem and two specific situations involving the problem. The experimental group subsequently explored the general problem with the focusing manual, while control subjects merely completed Part 1 of Gottschaldt's (1962) Hidden Figures test. After these tasks were completed, all subjects were asked to write stories about one of the specific situations previously described.

The investigators found a significant increase in the number of "emotional referents" contained in the stories of the experimental group. Emotional referents are verbal

descriptions of or references to affective states. The results indicated that focusing on the general problem increased the salience of problem-related feelings. Most importantly, the authors report that this effect was a function of focusing skill and not simply exposure to focusing instructions. The difference between groups was attributed to the performance of high focusers. There was no apparent differential effect of the type of task on the emotional quality of low focusers' stories. Focusing ability, as would be expected from our model, provides access to a rich and varied array of affective information which broadens the emotional context of the problem focused upon.

Vanden Bos (1973), in a review of unpublished research, cited studies which also support the contention that high focusing ability is associated with greater access to affective experience. He mentions briefly additional findings in the studies of Drury (1969) and Platt (1971). Drury found that focusers made more references to and gave greater elaboration of emotions in TAT stories than nonfocusers. Platt reported finding that focusers more frequently than nonfocusers described themselves as "sensitive".

A more detailed account of a study by Vanden Bos and Miller (1971) also appears in Vanden Bos' review. Although not directly related to the affective information

hypothesis, it is nonetheless relevant. The investigators found that focusers differed significantly from nonfocusers on the "sensing-intuition" dimension of the Myers-Briggs (Jungian) Type Indicator Scale. This dimension purportedly indicates whether one characteristically perceives the world by sensing directly through the sensory system or by an indirect process involving "unconscious" associations to external objects. High focusing ability was related to intuition (perception mediated by unconscious processes); low focusing ability was related to sensing (perception characterized by realistic sensory representation). This study suggests, Vanden Bos concludes, that focusers, as compared to nonfocusers, are more "flexible" perceivers. They utilize more sources of stimulation and more remote associations. However, the author's conclusion should be viewed with caution since the construct validity of the Myers-Briggs Scale remains to be demonstrated.

Additional support for the accessibility hypothesis may be found in research concerning the effect of focusing on Experiencing Scale (EXP) ratings. As will be recalled from the introduction, the Experiencing Scale is a measure of the degree to which immediate feelings are utilized as referents for self-exploration. High levels of EXP reflect the ongoing organization of a rich array of affective information. Since EXP levels are strikingly resistant to change (Gendlin et al, 1968), they may be considered an index of one's characteristic access to affective information. If so, then

the relationship between focusing and EXP ratings effectively indicates the association between focusing ability and affective accessibility.

Three studies have investigated the effect of focusing on EXP. The first such attempt involved 55 male hospitalized veterans, none of which was "actively psychotic". Freedman (1971; cited in Olsen, 1975) administered the focusing manual followed by the PFQ. A 30 to 90 minute semi-structured interview was then conducted with each patient individually. During the interview the experimenter questioned the patient about his hospitalization experience and encouraged him to "focus" on whatever feelings and thoughts emerged. No significant correlation was obtained between PFQ ratings and EXP for the whole interview, but a moderate correlation ($r = .43$, $p < .01$) was found for the first half of the interview following exposure to the manual. The author interpreted this finding as providing weak support for the hypothesis that focusing affects EXP. However, as Olsen (1975, p. 20) points out, "in view of the difficult (patient) population and limited training, it is remarkable that there was any effect at all."

McMullin (1972) presents strong support for the hypothesis that focusing facilitates EXP under more sound methodological conditions. Utilizing a "time-series design", he examined the effect of focusing under constant, but low levels ($X = 3.00$ on Carkhuff's, 1969 scales) of warmth,

empathy and genuineness. A 75-minute interview was sectioned into five 15-minute segments for the purpose of periodic assessment of EXP and experimental manipulation. During the third segment subjects were given the focusing manual. Results indicated that EXP increased significantly when focusing instructions were introduced. That this increase was a direct result of the instructions was apparent from comparisons with pre- and post-focusing segments. EXP levels during these periods were significantly below those occurring immediately after focusing.

The results of Freedman's and McMullin's research suggests that the effect of focusing on EXP is quite transitory, at least under low "therapeutic conditions" and very brief training. Olsen (1975) attempted to bolster the effect through an intensive training program combining relaxation and imagery with focusing. Twenty-three private practice clients were trained in Image Focusing in three, two-hour sessions. Eighty-three percent of these subjects were classified as "focusers" on the basis of instruments previously discussed upon termination of training. Yet, here also, Olsen found the same transitory effect. EXP ratings showed a substantial rise during experimental interviews immediately following training sessions, but subsequently dropped to pre-training levels when clients returned to their therapists. Furthermore, even in training, increases in EXP did not keep pace with the dramatic changes in focusing ability. It appears that clients were able to raise

their focusing ability under the experimenter's prompting and guidance, but could not convert such improved functioning into correspondingly higher levels of EXP in more spontaneous interaction.

Olsen's findings suggest that the relationship between focusing ability and EXP is not as simple and direct as had been assumed. Either some form of external support is continuously needed to strengthen this relationship or far more sophisticated training methods are necessary. Whatever proves to be the case, one thing is clear: engaging one's ability to focus appears to enhance the accessibility of affective information immediately thereafter. This finding is consistent with our integrated model. Relative accessibility is viewed as a direct result of the degree of one's absorbed attentiveness.

## Research on the Focusing Process

The focusing process itself has been explored in numerous investigations. While this area of research is not directly relevant to the present study, it is nonetheless worthy of review. Research interest in this area has been directed toward determining an optimal state for focusing to occur and specifying the beneficial effects engaging in this process. Of the two issues, the optimal state problem is most relevant to our integrated view. Findings related to the optimal state notion are largely based on the

observation that, at certain levels, tension and anxiety disturb attentional processes and, thus, hinder focusing.

Several studies have examined the effect of reducing situational tension on improving focusing performance. Weitzman (1967) reports an intriguing clinical innovation which combines focusing with systematic desensitization. Anectotal evidence suggests that focusing is aided by relaxation instructions which are an integral part of this procedure. Weitzman (1967) and Gendlin (1969) emphasize though that instructions must be brief, otherwise relaxation is too deep and focusing is inhibited. Olsen (1975) employed similar instructions with her Image Focusing technique and found a corresponding increase in focusing ability. With "day treatment" patients manifesting a broad range of neurotic and psychotic disturbance, Grey (1976) found hypnotic relaxation combined with detailed focusing instruction was superior to instruction alone in focusing training. Clearly, relaxation is important, but as yet no reliable index of optimal relaxation for focusing has been found. Given the curvilinear relationship between arousal intensity and the selectivity of attention (Walley and Weiden, 1973), the parameters of optimality may be most profitably examined from the attentional style perspective of our integrated model. The arousal limits necessary to maintain an absorbed state of attention should determine the optimal state for focusing.

Evidence of the beneficial effects of focusing comes from research on the anxiety or tension-reducing feature of this process. Gendlin and Berlin (1961) examined GSR recordings of 17 undergraduates who attended to disturbing and neutral ideas in a variety of ways. Six separate sets of instructions guided students in performing their task. The instructions emphasized the following activities: (a) direct reference to relevant internal experience, (b) continuous attention to an external object, (c) frequent shifting of attention to a number of irrelevant internal events, (d) speaking to an unfamiliar person, and (e) frequent shifting of attention to a number of external objects. Each set of instructions was followed by a two and one-half-minute period during which the subject carried out the task. Results indicated a significant decrease in the frequency and increase in the amplitude of GSRs during direct referencing. No other attentional mode was accompanied by such physiological changes, changes which reliably reflect a reduction of tension. The authors concluded that absorption in one's own experiencing is a tension-reducing, organismically adaptive process.

Methodological limitations in Gendlin and Berlin's research weaken the authors' conclusion; however, some support for their contention can be found in subsequent investigations. Although Wack (1973) did not find the same changes in electrodermal activity as a consequence of focusing, he did find "tentative evidence" to suggest

focusers are better able than nonfocusers to control the emission of GSRs. Partial support was also found in the research of Bernick and Oberlander (1968). Unfortunately, no research has yet tested the relationship between focusing and anxiety reduction under optimal and well-controlled conditions. Conditions which may facilitate focusing and control for differences in focusing ability either have not been employed or, when they have, inappropriate measures of anxiety have been used. Recent work by Don (1977) suggests that an examination of EEG patterns during focusing may provide a more adequate test of the hypothesis. Preliminary findings are promising and support the view that the focusing process has notable adaptive features. Currently, however, the specific function of absorbed attentiveness and representational efficiency in phasic reductions of anxiety is unclear.

## Summary and Hypotheses

Experiential focusing has been presented as an emotional problem-solving skill hypothesized to account for success in client-centered psychotherapy. As was pointed out in Chapter 1, progress in the understanding of this skill and its clinical implications has been hindered by a lack of sufficient demonstration of the adequacy of the PFQ as a measure of the focusing construct. In this chapter relevant theory and research have been reviewed in order to develop a comprehensive view of focusing ability for the purposes of

construct validation. The following picture emerges from this review. First, it is fairly clear that individual differences in selective attention contribute to differences in focusing ability, although an additional dimension of attentional style is involved as well. Second, while there is some evidence that imagery ability, especially the functional usefulness of images, are important in focusing, it is apparent that the literature is hardly conclusive. As a whole, the tendency in a number of studies has been to examine the consequences of focusing rather than the processes by which these consequences are attained. One of the most pressing needs for research on focusing ability is to explore the unexamined components of the process of focusing itself. An integration of the present state of our knowledge suggests that this effort requires specifically examining the composite attentional style variable and the functional usefulness of one's metaphors and images.

Two measures of absorbed attention and functional usefulness, the Absorption Scale (Tellegen and Atkinson, 1974) and the Space Relations test (Bennett, Seashore and Wesman, 1962), have been suggested as correlates of focusing ability. The present investigation attempts to further examine the relationships between these variables as a means of determining the construct validity of PFQ ratings. Specifically, it is hypothesized that the PFQ will show convergent and discriminant validity in the context of a multitrait-multimethod matrix (Campbell and Fiske, 1959)

determined by the above tests and measures of theoretically independent abilities, verbal comprehension and divergent thinking (Guilford, 1967). It is predicted that significant positive correlations will be obtained between PFQ ratings, the Space Relations test and Absorption scale scores, while zero correlations will appear between the PFQ and measures of the other abilities. It is also predicted that the resultant matrix of tests will conform to Campbell and Fiske's (1959) specifications as a demonstration of the construct validity of the PFQ. Chapter III presents an account of these specifications, their special application in the present case and the multitrait-multimethod matrix employed in this investigation.

# CHAPTER III

## METHOD

The validity of the Post-Focusing Questionnaire (PFQ) was examined within the conceptual framework presented in Chapter II and according to principles of construct validation set forth by Campbell and Fiske (1959). They advocate "utilizing a matrix of intercorrelations among tests representing at least two traits, each measured by at least two methods" (p. 104). The logic of their "multitrait-multimethod matrix" procedure applied to the present study allowed for the simultaneous determination of convergent and discriminant validity of PFQ ratings.

Convergent validation is established by the presence of high correlations between independent measures of the same trait. Confirmation by independent measurement method ensures that what is being measured is truly a trait or response tendency which can be observed under a variety of conditions. Discriminant validity is determined by low or zero correlations among measures of this same trait and different traits measured by similar methods. It is a demonstration that the trait under consideration can be meaningfully differentiated from other traits. The addition of independent measurement methods in the determination of both forms of validity also controls for the extent to which irrelevant method variance may contribute to indications of basic trait similarity or difference. In order to provide a

rigorous test of the adequacy of PFQ ratings as a measure of focusing ability, a 3x3 multitrait-multimethod matrix was developed for this study.

## Instruments

Three general classes of measurement methods were used to measure each of three abilities examined in this study. Measurement methods included self-reports, global judges' ratings and performance indices. Together these represent the principle sources of data employed by psychologists in the investigation of individual differences. The three traits selected were focusing ability and two independent abilities having certain superficial ties with focusing. The latter were Verbal Comprehension and one of Guilford's problem-solving abilities referred to as Divergent Production of Behavioral Implications (DBI) (Guilford and Hoepfner, 1971). Each of these traits will be discussed in turn along with the rationale for their selection and their respective methods of measurement.

Focusing Ability. Focusing ability is conceived as a complex skill involving at least two dimensions: the capacity for absorbed attention and the ability to produce functionally useful metaphors and images. Tellegen's (1977) Absorption Scale served as a self-report measure of this skill. The Absorption Scale is a 34-item true-false questionnaire which assesses one's "openness to absorbing

and self-altering experiences". The items question one's tendency to become immersed in personally significant events, amplify aspects of bodily experience and become deeply involved in the direct experience of self and others. Tellegen (1977) reports high internal consistency for the Absorption Scale and a test-retest reliability coefficient of .89. This scale is ordinarily administered in conjunction with several other scales in a multidimensional personality questionnaire. As the author suggested (Tellegen, 1978, personal communication), thirty "filler items" were added in order to use the Absorption Scale alone. The resulting instrument can be found in Appendix B.

Tellegen's absorption measure is the outgrowth of an attempt to dimensionalize a pool of questionnaire items representing a broad range of content thought to be related to hypnotic susceptibility. Originally, the authors intended to determine what kind of dimensions were present and how these were related to already established major personality dimensions. Thirteen primary factors emerged in an initial factor analysis. Two of these were discarded for methodological reasons. The remaining eleven were factor-analyzed along with two scales representing Stability versus Neuroticism and Introversion versus Extroversion (Block, 1965). Three factors resulted from this analysis, the two Eysenckian dimensions and an "absorption" factor.

Tellegen and Atkinson (1974, p. 272) note that

absorption items frequently refer to episodes of an altered state of attention best described as 'absorption' or 'fascination'. They further comment that:

> "These terms suggest a state of 'total attention' during which the available representational apparatus seems to be entirely dedicated to experiencing and modelling the attentional object, be it a landscape, a human being, a sound, a remembered incident or an aspect of one's self."

Inherent correlates of this attentional process are believed to be absence of meta-cognition, a heightened sense of the reality of the attentional object, imperviousness to normally distracting events, a vivid sense of subjective reality, the ability to operate various representational modalities synergistically and a sentient and tolerant 'openness to experience'. Research with the scale has shown that it is a good predictor of individual differences in selective attention (Davidson, Schwartz and Rothman, 1976) and meditative ability (Davidson, Goleman and Schwartz, 1976). Absorption appears to encompass a distinctive cognitive style which is entirely consistent with focusing ability and only moderately associated with hypnotic susceptibility.

The degree to which absorption also encompasses the representational dimension of focusing ability is unclear. Many test items relate to the evocation, vividness and functional usefulness of images, but no studies relating these variables to absorption appear in the literature.

Research in our facilities indicates that it is associated with imagery vividness and control. Correlations of .55 and .54 have been found between the Absorption Scale and, respectively, the Betts Vividness of Visual Imagery Scale and the Gordon Test of Visual Imagery Control. The latter finding suggests some association may exist between absorption and the functional usefulness of imagery. The Gordon test appears to share some common variance with spatial abilities' tests such as the Space Relations Test (Ernest, 1977), a major measure of the functional usefulness construct (Neisser, 1970).

Ratings of subjects' responses to the Post-Focusing Questionnaire (PFQ) served as global judges' ratings of focusing ability. The PFQ is an open-ended questionnaire designed to elicit subjects' descriptions of their focusing experience. The original version (Gendlin et al., 1968) has undergone several revisions to improve upon its reliability. Items have been added (Gendlin, 1969), the order of items changed (Wolfe and Vanden Bos, 1970) and several different rating scales and scoring procedures have been employed (Olsen, 1975; Vanden Bos, 1973). Although researchers continue to introduce slight variations in order and item content (e.g., Grey, 1976), present questionnaires generally conform to the Wolfe and Vanden Bos (1970) version. Currently, two rating schemes are in use for this form of the PFQ: Richert's (1969) five-point scale and Wolfe and Vanden Bos' four-point scale (Appendix D). Both scales

employ essentially the same scoring principles. Interjudge reliability has been generally high with either rating system; correlations of .80 or better are typical even with inexperienced raters (Vanden Bos, 1973).

Richert's scale was revised and extended for the present study to improve discrimination of the levels of focusing ability. In the author's experience, at least three distinct "steps" are noticeable once focusing is underway, and "focusers" can be ranked in terms of their facility in achieving one or more of these steps. Specifically, one may be able to directly refer to a "felt sense" of his or her problem but be unable to maintain direct reference long enough to elaborate upon it. Others may be able to elaborate its significance with words and/or images but be unable to integrate these into a reformulation of their problem. Still others can carry all of this forward with a significant release of tension and reformulation of the problem. Richert's rating system considers these steps but fails to offer sufficient examples or detailed criteria to aid in their identification. The present scale (Appendix C) overcomes these limitations with a clearer definition of the meaning of each score, more extensive scoring criteria and the liberal use of examples. In addition, the present scale distinguishes between "mind wandering" (scale value of one) and maintaining concentration on a problem without direct reference (scale value of two) a distinction not found in Richert's system.

Another reason for developing an improved rating scale was to insure that reliable ratings could be made with a shortened version of the PFQ. Time constraints imposed by the scheduling of subjects and concern over subject fatigue during protracted periods of testing necessitated using a less time-consuming instrument than the standard PFQ. A review of the development of this measure suggested that such a strategy would not unduly damage its psychometric structure. Increases in reliability associated with revisions of the PFQ appear to be more a function of improvements in rating systems and scoring procedures than the inclusion of additional items. Furthermore, a pilot study by the author comparing two forms of the PGQ, one with and one without Gendlin's (1969) additional items, indicated in general that little information is gained by using the expanded (standard) version. The shortened PFQ employed in the present study is virtually identical to the original questionnaire (Gendlin et al., 1968). A copy of this instrument may be found in Appendix B.

The final performance measure of focusing ability was the Space Relations Test of the Differential Aptitude Battery (Form L) (Bennet, Seashore and Wesman, 1962). The test consists of 60 items composed of two-dimensional patterns which can be folded into three-dimensional figures, and five drawings of completed figures. Testees are asked to decide which of the five figures can be made from the

pattern shown. This type of item represents a combination of two previous approaches to the measurement of one's ability to create functionally useful images, and is believed to effectively tap visual thinking capacity.

> "The ability to visualize a constructed object from a picture of pattern has been used frequently in tests of structural visualization. Similarly, the ability to imagine how an object would appear if rotated in various ways has been used effectively in the measurement of space perception. The item type used combines the functions of these previous item types, since both factors are considered important in any useful definition of ability to think in spatial terms." (Bennet, Seashore and Wesman, 1966, pp. 7-8).

Bennet, Seashore and Wesman (1966) report excellent test-retest reliabilities and ample criterion validity for this test. In addition, research with the Space Relations Test confirms its association with imagery ability and, in particular, the usefulness of images produced. Barratt (1953) has shown that subjects who report using a good deal of imagery on spatial relations tests generally obtain scores which are superior to those who do not. In a recent review of imagery ability and cognition, Ernest (1977) found Space Relations Test scores to be important predictors of cognitive behavior. In general, the spatial imagery ability measured by this test strongly and consistently contributed to learning, memory and problem-solving when tasks were difficult and encouraged the use of imagery. It appears that the Space Relations Test assesses one's ability to represent and use spatial information effectively in both remembering

and problem-solving, a skill hypothesized to be critical to focusing ability.

It should be noted that as a performance measure of focusing ability the Space Relations test may simply tap one component of this skill. It therefore may be considered only in a limited sense an alternate measure of it. Unfortunately, more suitable performance measures consistent with the theoretical conceptualization are not available, and developing such tests is beyond the scope of the present study.

It should be further noted that there are other potential limitations in the use of the Space Relations test. For one, the instrument was designed to assess imagery processes which may be independent of metaphor production. Although the skills involved in the generation and manipulation of images, as in the Space Relations test, are associated with effective performance on many cognitive tasks including such mental operations as rotation (Snyder, 1972) and comparisons (Paivio, 1978), the skill of using images specifically as metaphors is not explicitly assessed by this measure. The assumption in the present study is that these imagery skills are indeed associated, although evidence for this assertion is unavailable. In addition, to the extent that metaphor production and use is a verbal -- and not imagery -- skill, the Space Relations test may be irrelevant to its assessment. However, this limitation

should not dampen the relevance of this instrument in the present case. The study was designed to emphasize the use of images as mediators in focusing and thereby reduce the significance of verbal processing strategies in accounting for differences in focusing performance (see Paivio, 1969; 1978 for a discussion of factors influencing the arousal of either verbal or imaginal symbolic processes in cognition).

The final limitation involved in the use of the Space Relations test relates to its adequacy as a measure of representational efficiency or effectiveness. The reader will recall that our theoretical conceptualization borrows from Wexler's (1974 (a) and (b)) assertion that images and metaphors are useful in integrating information quickly and providing an evocative vehicle for further processing. Wexler implies that it is the vividness of these structures which determines their usefulness. Clearly, the Space Relations test is not a measure of imagery vividness (Ernest, 1977; Neisser, 1970). However, as Neisser (1970) points out, vividness appears to have little to do with functional usefulness or what an individual can do with the imagery he or she produces. It is in this regard that the Space Relations test appears to be one of the most appropriate measures available. As mentioned above, it is a good measure of one's ability to represent and use spatial information effectively.

Verbal Comprehension. Guilford (1967) argues that this

ability is the best and most widely replicated of all the intellectual abilities. It is dependably measured by vocabulary tests and is the most dominant factor in traditional intelligence scales. Since the common mode of representing internally evoked information during client-centered psychotherapy is linguistic, one might expect verbal comprehension to be an important contributor to the focusing process. Indeed, IQ has been found to be a good predictor of the continuation in and outcome of psychotherapy in the most recent comprehensive reviews of research on client variables in therapeutic process and outcome (Garfield, 1971, 1978; Luborsky et al., 1971). However, as Garfield (1971, 1978) points out, it is unclear whether this relationship is primarily attributable to verbal skills required by conventional psychotherapy or more complex social class variables also associated with IQ. Differing value systems, orientations and language systems between middle class therapists and lower class clients may be potent determinants. Consistent with this hypothesis, Carkhuff and Pierce (1967), for example, have found that racial and social class similarity of counsellor and client enhances the level of self-exploration. Gendlin (1961, 1970, 1974) and Wexler (1974a) also emphasize that the therapist's responses must be compatible and evocative with respect to the client's range of connotative meaning, although neither suggest that sophisticated verbal skills are required of the client for optimal experiencing. In fact, Gendlin and his

colleagues (Gendlin et al., 1968; Gendlin, 1969, 1974; Olsen, 1975) imply that deficiencies in focusing ability can be corrected without directly altering the client's verbal repertoire.

Given the above findings and the lack of theoretical significance of verbal comprehension in focusing ability, both these traits were expected to represent distinctly different cognitive abilities. In order to examine this hypothesis within a multitrait-multimethod matrix, two new measures of verbal comprehension were developed: a self-report instrument and global judges' rating procedure. The self-report measure required subjects to rate their verbal comprehension relative to all people their age. De Nisi and Shaw (1977) have shown that self-ratings of cognitive abilities are significantly correlated with actual performance on tests of these same abilities and independent of moderator effects such as social desirability and self-esteem. The authors provided subjects with definitions of each ability to be rated and sample items from recognized tests of these abilities. Although they obtained only moderate validity coefficients, e.g., r=.36 for verbal comprehension, the likelihood that they failed to provide sufficient definitions for individual scale points and used a highly truncated sample suggests higher correlations are possible. In the present study, De Nisi and Shaw's procedure was duplicated with a revised seven-point scale. The resulting instrument may be found in Appendix B.

Judges' ratings of verbal comprehension, in some respects, paralleled the self-report procedure. Two independent judges were given descriptions of the ability to be rated along with sample items from the vocabulary subtest of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (WAIS), a recognized test of this ability (Wechsler, 1955a). They were then asked to rate subjects' descriptions of complex emotions for the level of verbal comprehension they represent. Subjects' descriptions involved detailed definitions of the following emotional states: deep sorrow, jealousy, joy and loneliness. It was believed that asking for comprehensive definitions of these particular emotional states would provide judges with a fairly representative sample of subjects' "feeling vocabulary". It was also our intention to measure verbal skill in a linguistic domain most relevant to focusing. On the basis of the range and appropriateness of words used in each description, judges rated subjects' verbal IQ (VIQ) on a seven-point scale. Each scale point was anchored to a VIQ range from 81 and below (scale value of one) to 119 and above (scale value of seven). Essentially, judges were to predict WAIS VIQs for each subject from their description of emotions. The "Description of Emotions" test and judges' rating scales can be found in Appendix B and C, respectively.

The WAIS vocabulary subtest served as the performance measure of verbal comprehension. Wechsler's Vocabulary test

is a 40-item test requiring Ss to supply common meanings for a variety of words. It is an extremely reliable test which is highly correlated with verbal comprehension (r = .86; Weschler, 1955b). While standard administration of this test requires the examiner to elicit oral answers in an individual testing context, it was believed that this test could be administered in a group context with written responses without unduly jeopardizing its validity.

Divergent Production of Behavioral Implications. Guilford and his associates (Guilford, 1967; Guilford and Hoepfner, 1971; Hendricks, Guilford and Hoepfner, 1969) imply that individuals achieve a novel understanding of self and creative solutions to personal problems primarily through elaborating upon available behavioral information. This process of elaboration, theoretically referred to as divergent production of behavioral implications (DBI), is determined by one's ability to generate a variety of alternatives from the inherent implications of behavioral information. Despite an apparent similarity between this construct and Gendlin's or Wexler's description of differentiation during focusing, DBI seems to be a quite different ability. It neither requires an absorbed attentional style to be optimally engaged nor relates specifically to the articulation of self-referent information.

Guilford (1967) notes that behavioral information,

essentially the nonverbal features of human interactions, can be differentiated into self- and other-referent forms. He suggests that these two forms are independent classes of information, as distinct from each other as they have been shown to be different from general sensory, "symbolic" and "semantic" information. If Guilford is correct, then it follows from his "structure of intellect" model that each form should have associated with it a unique set of cognitive abilities. However, existent tests of DBI merely examine other-referent aspects of this ability. They test an individual's range of expectancies in general social interactions. No DBI tests have been developed to demonstrate DBI ability in the domain of self-referent information.

While focusing ability may be related in some way to DBI with respect to information about self, there is no reason to expect a relationship between focusing ability and DBI as currently assessed. Whether or not one can entertain a raft of independent possibilities in <u>potential</u> social interactions should have little to do with one's ability to effectively focus on the internal reference of one's <u>actual</u> experience. Although Guilford (1967) suggests that this is due to the distinctly different kind of information involved, the analysis offered in this proposal suggests that it is a matter of attentional style as well. DBI marker tests (e.g., Multiple Social Problems) require a systematic, effortful retrieval of information from memory storage which

is incompatible with the absorbed attention of direct reference. Thus, these appear to be distinctly different abilities.

No self-report or global judges' rating measures had been developed for DBI prior to this investigation. As with verbal comprehension, self-ratings of DBI used here were based on the work of De Nisi and Shaw (1977). A copy of the self-report instrument can be found in Appendix B. Global judges' ratings of this skill were more complex than those employed for the other two traits. Two independent judges were asked to rate subjects' Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) responses for evidence of DBI. The TAT was used since it presents nonverbal (i.e., "behavioral") information relevant to interpersonal relations. As such it should be an optimal medium for the operation of this skill. Subjects were presented with card 4 of Murray's (1943) series of the TAT. The card depicts a domestic scene involving an adult man and woman. Given ten minutes, subjects were asked to write "as many different stories as possible about <u>what could be happening between these two people</u>". They were told to use only two or three sentences for each story, but to provide enough information so that the experimenter could clearly understand what they meant. Judges rated these protocols on the basis of the number of different stories produced and the degree of elaboration of behavioral information involved in each. An overall rating for the entire protocol indicated the judges' estimate of the

subject's normative standing on DBI. Detailed scoring instructions can be found in Appendix C; instructions to subjects are found in Appendix A.

Hendricks, Guilford and Hoepfner's (1969) Multiple Social Problems (MSP) test served as the performance measure of DBI. The MSP requires subjects to produce a variety of personal problems which may occur in common interpersonal situations. The test consists of four items such as, "What personal problems can a BROTHER and SISTER have with each other?". Subjects are asked to write down as many problems as they can think of in a given time limit. The authors found that this test could be reliably scored and that it demonstrated the highest, most uncontaminated factor loading (.53) of any of the DBI tests in their battery. The MSP test and scoring instructions can be found in Appendix B and C, respectively.

Subjects

Fifty-nine volunteer subjects were recruited from three separate institutions in the City of Edmonton: the University of Alberta (N = 14), Alberta College (N = 16) and Alberta Vocational Center (N = 29). The latter two institutions are adult education centers offering a variety of programs primarily aimed at "upgrading" educational skills. All subjects had at least some high school level education, and most were currently involved in formal

educational pursuits. Their age range was 18 to 24 years old and they came from a broad variety of socio-economic backgrounds. While most were white, several Native people and first generation Asian Canadians participated in this study. Forty-five were female and fourteen were male. Although subject selection was not determined by stratified random sampling, it is evident that these subjects were far more representative of the public at large than is ordinarily the case in psychological research.

Subjects were recruited from notices placed in various areas of the institution. Notices informed prospective subjects that they would receive $5.00 payment for about three hours of psychological testing and confidential written reporting of their personal experiences. Included was a description of the study and brief outline of the focusing task. It was introduced as a useful personal problem-solving tool which, once acquired as a consequence of participation in this study, may be employed in other situations. Interested persons were asked to present themselves to the experimenter who was available periodically to sign up subjects and answer questions. Subjects were screened to make sure they met the requirements for participation. They had to be 18 to 24 years of age, have or be presently obtaining a high school education, and be fluent English speakers. These restrictions allowed us to control for age effects on focusing ability, insure that a broad range of IQ was being

tapped and, yet, guarantee that learning or language deficiencies would not contaminate our results.

Procedure

The test battery was administered on two separate occasions, one week apart. Each testing session involved groups of from three to 12 subjects, and lasted approximately two hours. In the first session, the Absorption Scale, self-ratings of verbal comprehension and DBI, TAT card 4, Description of Emotions and Multiple Social Problems (MSP) tests were administered. Session two included an introduction to the Focusing Manual, two focusing trials and administration of the PFQ. As Gendlin (1969) suggests, a clarification of focusing instructions was offered between trials to help resolve difficulties with the technique. The Focusing Manual (see Appendix B) incorporated the use of images as described by Gendlin and Olsen (1970) to enhance the influence of imagery ability on the focusing experience. However, our imagery instructions were far less elaborate than those found in Olsen's (1975) Image Focusing method. Session two also included the Space Relations and WAIS Vocabulary tests along with a re-administration of self-ratings of verbal comprehension and DBI. The latter scales were re-administered to assess their test-retest reliability.

Candidness in response to test materials was emphasized

and encouraged by assuring confidentiality and anonymity. Subjects were assigned numbers of identification on test materials. No names were recorded and no public disclosures of personal reactions were requested during experimental sessions. Subjects were also told that they were free to cease participating at any time and no explanations would be required. Three subjects did drop out and were paid for their participation up to the point of their departure. One subject dropped out in session one and two in session two. The latter subject voluntarily admitted that anxiety reactions precluded his continuing with the focusing instructions.

Once the data were completely collected, raters were trained and the data scored for analysis. Eight persons participated as raters in this study: four were Ph.D. psychologists with at least some counselling or clinical experience, three were senior graduate students in clinical psychology, and one was a psychiatric nursing instructor in the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Alberta. Independent rating teams were composed of two judges, one of whom was a Ph.D. psychologist. Each team was responsible for scoring one of the following tests: PFQ, TAT, Description of Emotions and MSP. Standard procedures were used for training raters in this study. Each team met with the author to discuss the ratings to be made. In the initial meeting each judge was given a copy of the rating manual and one-half of the pilot data available on the test they were to rate (N =

8). Following discussion of the rating instructions, a second meeting was arranged and the judges left to independently rate the pilot data. During the second meeting, ratings were compared, discrepancies between raters discussed and, if necessary, revisions were made to the scoring manuals. Judges were then given the second half of the pilot data and asked to rate it along with re-rating the original material. A third meeting was then arranged to discuss ratings. No more than three meetings were necessary to find sufficient agreement between raters to begin scoring actual experimental data.

## Summary of Research Design and Predictions

In order to assess the adequacy of the PFQ as a measure of focusing ability, a multitrait-multimethod validational matrix (Campbell and Fiske, 1959) was developed. Entries in this matrix include self-report measures, global judges' ratings and performance indices representing measures of focusing ability and two different cognitive abilities, divergent production of behavioral implications or DBI (Guilford and Hoepfner, 1971) and verbal comprehension (Guilford, 1967; Wechsler, 1955b). In addition to judges' ratings of the PFQ, measures of focusing ability included Tellegen's (1977) Absorption Scale, a self-report measure of one's capacity for absorbed or "total" attention, and the Space Relations Test, a measure of the functional usefulness of one's imagery ability. DBI and verbal comprehension

measures involved self-ratings similar in form to those developed by De Nisi and Shaw (1977). Global judges' ratings of these skills included ratings of TAT protocols and subjects' descriptions of emotions. Recognized performance tests of these abilities, the Multiple Social Problems test (Guilford and Hoepfner, 1971) and the Vocabulary subtest from the WAIS (Wechsler, 1955a) rounded out the matrix. It was generally predicted that measures of the same trait would correlate significantly higher among themselves than with measures of different traits involving different measurement methods. Furthermore, the validity values were expected to significantly exceed correlations among different traits measured by similar methods. Specifically, it was predicted that correlations between independent measures of focusing ability and similar measures of DBI and verbal comprehension would not attain significance beyond what is attributable to common method variance. No such predictions were made with respect to relationships obtained between DBI and verbal comprehension measures.

# CHAPTER IV

## RESULTS

The multitrait-multimethod matrix derived from this investigation was expected to reflect the construct validity of PFQ ratings. Thus, it was anticipated that the matrix would conform to the specifications of Campbell and Fiske (1959) and produce theoretically consistent findings under factor analytical examination. Before discussing the findings, however, a brief description of multitrait-multimethod matrices is in order to orient the reader to the terminology and evaluative criteria involved in these analyses. Table 1 (adapted from Jackson, 1969) illustrates a typical multitrait-multimethod matrix using synthetic data for the purposes of discussion. Note that the diagonal submatrices are labeled "monomethod-heterotrait submatrices", while the off diagonal submatrices are referred to as "heterotrait-heteromethod submatrices". The meaning of these designations should be fairly clear. The diagonal submatrices represent intercorrelations among different (hetero-) traits measured by the same (mono-) method, while the off diagonal submatrices show intercorrelations among these traits measured by different (hetero-) methods. These latter, heterotrait-heteromethod, submatrices are of particular interest since their diagonal elements represent convergent validities.

Campbell and Fiske have proposed several informal

TABLE 1

A Synthetic Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix

| METHOD | TRAIT | METHOD I | | | METHOD II | | | METHOD III | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | $A_1$ | $B_1$ | $C_1$ | $A_2$ | $B_2$ | $C_2$ | $A_3$ | $B_3$ | $C_3$ |
| I (e.g., Self-Reports) | $A_1$ | | | | | | | | | |
| | $B_1$ | .49 | | | | | | | | |
| | $C_1$ | .38 | .37 | | | | | | | |
| II (e.g., Judges' Ratings) | $A_2$ | (.36) | .15 | .17 | Monomethod-Heterotrait Submatrices | | | | | |
| | $B_2$ | .13 | (.42) | .23 | | | | | | |
| | $C_2$ | .21 | .19 | (.30) | | | | | | |
| III (e.g., Performance) | $A_3$ | Heterotrait-Heteromethod Submatrices | | | (.48) | .20 | .18 | | | |
| | $B_3$ | | | | .14 | (.38) | .15 | .49 | | |
| | $C_3$ | | | | .19 | .12 | (.42) | .32 | .47 | |

Note: The validity diagonals are the two sets of values in parentheses.

criteria for evaluating the multitrait-multimethod matrix: (1) Heteromethod, convergent validities should be statistically significant and large enough to warrant further consideration; (2) convergent validities should be greater than heteromethod correlations between the test (e.g. PFQ) and irrelevant trait measures in the battery; (3) a trait measures should correlate higher with heteromethod measures of the same trait than with monomethod measures of irrelevant traits; and (4) a similar pattern of trait intercorrelations should be apparent in both monomethod-heterotrait and heteromethod-heterotrait submatrices. Matrices which conform to these specifications clearly demonstrate a test's convergent and discriminate validity without the distorting effects of method variance.

Although Jackson (1969) has shown that a number of problems are associated with the application of Campbell and Fiske's criteria, these criteria are undoubtedly useful in the initial examination of a multitrait-multimethod matrix. Further, more formal quantitative analyses may follow if warranted on the basis of this initial examination. The present study involved such an analytical strategy. It must be noted, however, that the application of Campbell and Fiske's method in this instance is a conservative test of construct validity. The use of a test like Space Relations within the current framework does not allow for the complete assessment of the focusing ability trait by a performance measure. The practical effect of such an entry in the matrix

is to limit the extent of convergence and discrimination which may theoretically appear. This effect should occur primarily by virtue of an attennuated correlation between Space Relations test scores and the self report measure of focusing ability. Emphasizing as it does the attentional style component of focusing ability, the latter measure, the Absorption Scale, may show much less common variance with Space Relations than either test evinces with the PFQ. The net effect of such attenuation would not only be to reduce the number of hetero-method convergent validities potentially available for this trait from three to two (i.e., PFQ with the Absorption Scale and PFQ with Space Relations) but also restrict the number of heterotrait comparisons (criteria 2 and 3 above) which could possibly indicate discriminant validity. Despite this problem, sufficient convergence and discrimination is possible within such a matrix to allow some measure of construct validity.

With the conservative nature of the chosen methodology in mind, statistical analyses were carried out. Subjects' scores on the various trait measures were intercorrelated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients. The resultant 9x9 multitrait-multimethod matrix was then examined according to Campbell and Fiske's recommendations. Subsequent explorations of the data emphasized factor analytical resolutions of the matrix for a more rigorous test of the hypotheses.

Primary Analysis of the Data

Distributions were obtained for each of the tests in this study and were checked for skewedness and truncations. No distribution deviated sufficiently from normality to suggest a need for transforming the data. In addition, the usual descriptive statistics, including means, standard deviations and reliability coefficients were computed. These appear in Table 2. Reliability estimates were obtained from test manuals for the Absorption Scale (Tellegen, 1977), Space Relations test (Bennett, Seashore and Wesman, 1962), and the WAIS Vocabulary test (Wechsler, 1955a) and represent test-retest correlations. All other estimates were derived empirically, either on the basis of test-retest (one-week interval) or inter-judge Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients. Reliability values compare very favorably with those for other tests used in informal multitrait-multimethod examinations (cf. Campbell and Fiske, 1959; Jackson, 1969) and factor analytical investigations (cf. Guilford, 1969).

The product-moment correlations resulting from an initial analysis of the data appear in Table 3. An examination of the heteromethod, convergent validities (underlined values in the matrix) indicates no evidence for convergent validity of PFQ ratings, i.e. no significant correlations were obtained between independent measures of focusing ability. However, ample convergent validity is

TABLE 2

Test Means, Standard Deviation and Reliabilities

| Name of Test | Mean | Standard Deviation | Reliability |
|---|---|---|---|
| Absorption Scale | 23.12 | 6.12 | .89 |
| PFQ Rating | 2.53 | 1.00 | .84 |
| Space Relations | 35.41 | 10.55 | .84 |
| Self-Rating Verbal | 4.64 | 0.99 | .70 |
| Description of Emotions | 3.65 | 0.81 | .54 |
| WAIS Vocabulary | 50.27 | 12.20 | .62 |
| Self-Rating DBI | 5.01 | 0.93 | .95 |
| TAT Rating | 4.53 | 1.27 | .94 |
| Multiple Social Problems | 8.46 | 3.40 | .87 |

TABLE 3

Initial Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix

| METHOD | TRAIT | METHOD I | | | METHOD II | | | METHOD III | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Absorption Scale | Self-Rating Verbal | Self-Rating DBI | PFQ | Des. of Emotions | TAT | Space Relations | WAIS Vocabulary | Multiple Social Problems |
| I. Self-Reports | Focusing Ability | (.89) | | | | | | | | |
| | Verbal Comprehension | .05 | (.84) | | | | | | | |
| | DBI | .14 | .28* | (.84) | | | | | | |
| II. Judges' Ratings | Focusing Ability | .12 | -.05 | .(2 | (.70) | | | | | |
| | Verbal Comprehension | -.11 | .27* | .15 | .02 | (.54) | | | | |
| | DBI | -.02 | .18 | .(2 | -.05 | .01 | (.62) | | | |
| III. Performance | Focusing Ability | .15 | .25 | .27* | -.07 | .25 | .16 | (.95) | | |
| | Verbal Comprehension | -.01 | .63** | .34** | .10 | .49** | .24 | .43** | (.94) | |
| | DBI | -.23 | .06 | .02 | -.04 | .12 | .28* | .25 | .37** | (.87) |

Note: The values in parentheses are reliability coefficients, and the underlined values are convergent validities.

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

demonstrated for verbal comprehension measures and some appears for Guilford's DBI measure. Self and judges' ratings of verbal comprehension, as well as raw scores on the WAIS Vocabularly subtest, showed consistently significant intercorrelations with each other. Two of the three measures of DBI were also significantly correlated: Guilford's Multiple Social Problems test and judges' ratings of subject's TAT protocols. The remaining measure, Self Ratings of DBI, failed to achieve the significant intercorrelation that was predicted. Overall, the pattern of heteromethod, convergent validities suggested a further consideration of only the validity of verbal comprehension and DBI measures. Before proceeding with this examination, however, additional analyses were undertaken to examine the relationship between focusing ability measures.

Several analyses of variance were computed to test for deviations in linearity which may account for a lack of significant correlation between PFQ ratings, Absorption Scale scores and the Space Relations test. In two one-way analyses of variance with unequal N (Winer, 1962) no significant differences were found between the means of Absorption Scale and Space Relations test scores within the four levels of PFQ ratings. These findings are consistent with the assumption of linearity, and support the results of the correlational analysis.

A further test of linearity was carried out by

examining the possibility that the Absorption and Space Relations variables interactively determine focusing ability. A 2x2 analysis of variance with unequal N was computed with two levels of Absorption and two levels of Space Relations ability. The two levels were determined by a median split procedure. Subjects scoring above the median on a given test were considered as demonstrating a "high" level of that ability, whereas those scoring at or below the median were considered "low" on the particular ability measured. Again the findings were consistent with the assumption of linearity. No significant interaction effect was obtained. It was concluded that the lack of a significant correlation between PFQ ratings and the two additional hypothesized measures of focusing ability is a valid reflection of the statistical independence of PFQ ratings and these two variables in the present investigation.

Although there was no evidence that the Space Relations test tapped an ability dimension associated with PFQ ratings, the factorial complexity of the Absorption Scale (Tellegen and Atkinson, 1974) suggested that some set of its subscales may show a significant association with the PFQ. It was reasoned that items belonging to certain subscales such as Dissociation (e.g. "If I wish, I can imagine that my body is so heavy that I could not move it if I wanted to.") and Synesthesia (e.g. "Textures such as wool, sand, wood - sometimes remind me of colors or music.") may be acting as

"suppressor variables" in the correlational analysis. Neither of these attributes is relevant to our conceptualization of focusing ability and, thus, may be merely adding unwelcome variance in this investigation.

In order to test the hypothesis that some subset of Absorption Scale items suppressed the correlation with PFQ ratings two strategies were adopted. First, each item in the scale (N=34) was independently correlated with subjects' PFQ ratings. All items achieving biserial correlation coefficients (McNemar, 1962) of .20 or better (disregarding sign) were combined to create a 12-item "empirical" subscale of the Absorption measure. The resulting instrument (Subscale A), which can be found in Appendix B, significantly correlated at .49 ($p < .01$) with PFQ ratings. Next, encouraged by this result, a more theoretically consistent instrument was developed.

All items in the original scale found to be irrelevant to the theoretical conceptualization of focusing ability were eliminated from the new subscale. These included items specific to impressionability (e.g. "I can be greatly moved by eloquent and poetic language."), Synesthesia (N=4) and Dissociation (N=3). Ambiguous items (N=2) (e.g. "Sometimes I experience things as if they were doubly real.") and all other items clearly irrelevant to the conceptualization (N=3) (e.g. "At times I somehow feel the presence of someone who is not physically there.") were also discarded. The

remaining 20 items included references to imperviousness to normally distracting events, states of absorbed attention, imaginative involvement and, what Tellegen and Atkinson (1974) consider "Openness to Experience". Three items which emphasized passive fascination with visual and other sensory events (eg. "When I listen to music, I can get so caught up in it that I don't notice anything else.") were retained, but negatively keyed. It was reasoned that such sensory fixations would hinder focusing (cf. Gendlin, 1969, 1978; Gendlin and Olsen, 1970). Therefore, those who answered "false" to these items would likely be better focusers than those who answered "true". The resulting instrument (Subscale B) subsumed all 12 "empirical" items, and correlated at .77 ($p < .01$) with the original Absorption Scale. It also significantly correlated at .49 ($p < .01$) with PFQ ratings. Subscale B may be found in Appendix B.

Secondary Analysis of the Data

An alternative multitrait-multimethod matrix was generated using the theoretical revision of the Absorption Scale. Table 4 presents the results of this secondary correlational analysis. It must be noted this analysis is purely exploratory since no efforts were made in the present study to cross-validate the revised absorption measure. An examination of the matrix reveals that, outside of the significant correlation with PFQ ratings, no significant correlations were obtained between Absorption Subscale B and

TABLE 4

Multitrait-Multimethod Matrix Involving a Theoretical Revision of the Absorption Scale

| METHOD | TRAIT | METHOD I | | | METHOD II | | | METHOD III | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Absorption Scale | Self-Rating Verbal | Self-Rating DBI | PFQ | Des. of Emotions | TAT | Space Relations | WAIS Vocabulary | Multiple Social Problems |
| I. Self-Reports | Focusing Ability | (.72) | | | | | | | | |
| | Verbal Comprehension | .12 | (.84) | | | | | | | |
| | DBI | .10 | .28* | (.84) | | | | | | |
| II. Judges' Ratings | Focusing Ability | .49** | -.05 | .02 | (.70) | | | | | |
| | Verbal Comprehension | -.05 | .27* | .15 | .02 | (.54) | | | | |
| | DBI | -.12 | .18 | .02 | -.05 | .01 | (.62) | | | |
| III. Performance | Focusing Ability | .15 | .25 | .27* | -.07 | .25 | .16 | (.95) | | |
| | Verbal Comprehension | .17 | .63** | .34** | .10 | .49** | .24 | .43** | (.94) | |
| | DBI | -.05 | .06 | .02 | -.04 | .12 | .28* | .25 | .37** | (.87) |

Note: The underlined values are convergent validities.

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$

any other instrument. Thus, it appears that the inclusion of the subscale added convergent validity for PFQ ratings while maintaining the previous discrimination between traits. Overall, the matrix suggests a substantial degree of convergent and discriminant validity for many of the trait measures employed, although some degree of trait contamination and method variance is also in evidence. An inspection of the matrix in light of Campbell and Fiske's (1959) recommendations should illustrate this point.

It will be recalled that Campbell and Fiske proposed four informal criteria for examining multitrait-multimethod matrices. Their first requirement relates to the size and significance of heteromethod, convergent validities. Inspection of the validity diagonals indicates that several values are significant and sufficiently large to satisfy this requirement, and warrant further consideration of their validity. Two instruments, Self Rating of DBI and the Space Relations test, account for the lack of ideal results. Neither test was found to be significantly associated with either of its predicted correlates. Instead, both were found to be significantly correlated with each other and most of the verbal comprehension measures. The pattern of heteromethod relationships among these particular tests clearly indicates that all share some common trait variance. However, despite less than ideal findings, a moderate degree of convergent validity is evident for two of the recognized trait measures employed in this study, i.e. PFQ ratings and

the WAIS Vocabulary test. Each shows a large, significant correlation with at least one of its predicted correlates. The third measure, the Multiple Social Problems test, warrants additional consideration. However, the unitary, low level of correlation obtained for this instrument suggests, at best, only a tenuous demonstration of validity.

Further examination of the significant convergent validities reveals that these values satisfy Campbell and Fiske's second criterion and, thus, evince a degree of discriminant validity as well. They all exceed correlations obtained between their respective variables (e.g. PFQ ratings and Absorption Subscale B) and any other variable having neither trait nor method in common (e.g. for PFQ ratings: WAIS Vocabulary and Multiple Social Problems; Self Rating Verbal and Self Rating DBI). Verification may be obtained by comparing significant values in the validity diagonals with values in identical columns and rows in the heterotrait-heteromethod submatrices. Note that for two variables, Self Rating Verbal and TAT ratings, validity values only minimally exceed correlations with supposedly irrelevant tests, the Space Relations and WAIS Vocabulary tests, respectively. This finding is consistent with the presence of overlapping trait variance noted earlier. Its principle impact, with respect to the recognized trait measures, is to limit the discriminant validity of the Multiple Social Problems test, at least as it is reflected in the present matrix through its association with TAT

ratings. However, most important to the purpose of the present study is the finding that no such trait overlap appears with respect to either PFQ ratings or Absorption Subscale B. As expected, neither variable was significantly or even marginally associated with any variable designed to measure a different trait by an alternative method. Both, therefore, appear to demonstrate good discriminant validity.

Additional evidence of discriminant validity is provided by a comparison between significant heteromethod convergent values and efforts to measure different traits by similar methods. As Campbell and Fiske have argued, the degree of a variable's discriminant validity is also a function of the extent to which its correlation with other relevant variables exceeds correlations due merely to the similarity of measurement technique. It is through such comparisons that the effect of <u>method variance</u> may be partialled out. For the particular variables in question, this involves comparing their values in the heterotrait-monomethod submatrices. For the Absorption Subscale, PFQ ratings, Description of Emotions and TAT ratings this requirement is met to a considerable degree. It is met to a lesser extent for the WAIS Vocabulary test, lesser still for Self Rating Verbal and hardly at all for the Multiple Social Problems test. The latter finding extends previous observations regarding the Multiple Social Problems test. Low convergent validity, poor discrimination at the trait level and, here, evidence of overlapping method variance,

obscures the significance of this variable in the present study. The evidence accrued thus far indicates that PFQ ratings and the Absorption Subscale B measure a relatively discrete trait uncontaminated by method factors, while the other measures share considerable trait and some method variance.

A final perusal of the matrix will illustrate the differences in discriminant validity of the crucial trait measures and help summarize the findings. Campbell and Fiske point out that the same pattern of trait relationship is necessary in each submatrix in order to reflect good discriminant validity. Departures from this their fourth requirement in the heteromethod portions represent trait overlap while discrepancies in the monomethod portions implicate distortions due to method variance. Clearly, the patterns are not similar. The departures are particularly evident in the lower third of the matrix, in the off diagonal portions involving intercorrelations with verbal comprehension and DBI variables. Frequent, relatively high correlations with the WAIS Vocabulary test in this portion suggests that a verbal or general intelligence factor may account for the nature of trait overlap. Consistent intercorrelations between performance measures in this portion suggest that similarities in these measurement techniques may have had a significant influence on the findings. Interestingly, the highest correlation between the Multiple Social Problems test and any other variable appears

here also, suggesting that trait and method contamination combined to minimize the significance of its heteromethod convergent validity. Within this context of overlapping sources of variance, the two correlated focusing ability measures stand out as the most uncontaminated variables in the study.

## Factor Analytical Resolution of the Data

In order to formally test the contention that three distinct traits are reflected in the matrix, despite the fact that one of them may be obscured by irrelevant trait and method variance, a factor analysis was undertaken. Jackson (1969, 1975) has suggested that a factor analytical resolution of a multitrait-multimethod matrix may enable an investigator to separate components of variance which would otherwise obscure findings. Although he suggests using an unusually complex factoring method, the more traditional principle axes approach was employed. It was believed that Jackson's (1975) factoring technique was unnecessary given the relatively clear pattern of relationships and size of the present matrix. However, consistent with Jackson's approach, the component factor analysis model was selected for our purposes. Three factors were extracted according to Guttman's (1954) criterion (see also Kaiser, 1960) and rotated to simple structure by Kaiser's (1958) varimax. Tables 5 and 6 contain the unrotated and rotated factor matrices. The three factors accounted for 58.95 percent of

TABLE 5

Unrotated Factor Matrix

| TEST | FACTOR I | FACTOR II | FACTOR III | $h^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Absorption Subscale B | .20 | .82 | .22 | .76 |
| 2. PFQ Ratings | .06 | .78 | .36 | .74 |
| 3. Space Relations | .64 | -.05 | .02 | .41 |
| 4. Self-Rating Verbal | .70 | .02 | -.24 | .54 |
| 5. Description of Emotions | .57 | -.06 | -.31 | .42 |
| 6. WAIS Vocabulary | .89 | .05 | .01 | .80 |
| 7. Self-Rating DBI | .49 | .15 | -.40 | .42 |
| 8. TAT Rating | .34 | -.39 | .56 | .58 |
| 9. Multiple Social Problems | .43 | -.33 | .59 | .64 |
| % Total Variance | 28.92 | 17.39 | 12.64 | |
| % Common Variance | 49.06 | 29.50 | 21.44 | |

TABLE 6

Orthogonally Rotated Factor Matrix

| TEST | FACTOR I | FACTOR II | FACTOR III | $h^2$ |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Absorption Subscale B | .13 | .86 | -.08 | .76 |
| 2. PFQ Ratings | -.06 | .86 | -.01 | .74 |
| 3. Space Relations | .56 | .05 | .31 | .41 |
| 4. Self-Rating Verbal | .73 | .02 | .09 | .54 |
| 5. Description of Emotions | .64 | -.10 | .02 | .42 |
| 6. WAIS Vocabulary | .80 | .17 | .36 | .80 |
| 7. Self-Rating DBI | .62 | .05 | -.17 | .42 |
| 8. TAT Rating | .04 | -.09 | .75 | .56 |
| 9. Multiple Social Problems | .11 | -.00 | .79 | .64 |
| % Total Variance | 25.76 | 16.87 | 16.32 | |
| % Common Variance | 43.70 | 28.62 | 27.68 | |

the total variance, and were readily interpretable.

Interpretation of the Factors

The interpretation of each factor is based upon the apparent common-factor content on tests loading .30 or higher on the factor. The factor loadings for each factor are listed along with any additional loadings of .30 or higher on other factors, where tests proved to be factorially complex. The factors will be discussed in the order of their prominence in accounting for the percentage of total variance:

| FACTOR I | General Intelligence |
|---|---|
| 6. WAIS Vocabulary | .80 (Factor III .36) |
| 4. Self Rating Verbal | .73 |
| 5. Description of Emotions | .64 |
| 7. Self Rating DBI | .62 |
| 3. Space Relations | .56 (Factor III .31) |

This factor designates the most salient trait in the matrix. The tests which load on it all assess one's ability to think in either verbal or spatial terms. In so doing, each may be understood as representing in part what Wechsler and others have referred to as "general intelligence" (Matarazzo, 1972). Not surprisingly, the three tests with highest loadings on this factor were originally designed to measure verbal comprehension, the most dominant factor in traditional intelligence scales (Guilford, 1967). Of the remaining two tests, the Space Relations measure demands

little comment. It has typically shown moderate to high correlations with standard intelligence tests (Bennett, Seashore and Wesman, 1966). The final measure, Self Rating DBI, has no such history of association with the concept of general intelligence, but, like the others, it attempts to assess one's capacity to reason. The test specifically asks subjects to rate their "Creative Social Thinking". Although this ability is clearly defined, it is unfamiliar and difficult to judge. Subjects' judgments regarding their general intelligence, a more familiar notion, likely influenced their ratings and led to this test's loading on Factor I.[1]

The secondary loadings on Factor III for the WAIS Vocabulary and Space Relations test are intriguing. Factor III, as will be shown, is heavily weighted by DBI and, currently, there is no evidence to suggest trait similarity between DBI, verbal comprehension, and spatial manipulation abilities (cf. Guilford and Hoepfner, 1971). Thus, these secondary loadings may reflect, as was suspected in the

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[1] A partial test of the hypothesis that Factor I is a composite or general intelligence (g) factor is available by extracting additional factors and examining the pattern of factor splitting. In a five-factor varimax solution the hypothesized g factor split into two readily interpretable factors consistent with the hypothesis. The first of these was clearly defined by verbal comprehension measures and was so interpreted. The second factor was determined by Space Relations, Self Rating DBI and a small portion of the variance of Self Rating Verbal and WAIS Vocabulary scores. This latter factor obviously represented what remained of g in the matrix once the verbal comprehension factor was removed.

informal analysis of the matrix, common method variance. The possibility of method contamination in Factor III will be discussed further below.

| FACTOR II | Focusing Ability |
|---|---|
| 1. Absorption Subscale B | .86 |
| 2. PFQ Ratings | .86 |

As expected the two focusing ability measures unequivocally identify this factor. Since the Absorption subscale is a composite of items selected on the basis of their affinity with the theoretical conceptualization of the focusing trait, this factor was labelled, "Focusing Ability". It is important to note how "pure" this factor emerged in the analysis. No subsidiary loadings even marginally approach the .30 criterion for consideration. These findings are a strong demonstration of the uniqueness of the focusing trait and the discriminant validity of PFQ ratings.

| FACTOR III | Divergent Production of Behavioral Implications |
|---|---|
| 9. Multiple Social Problems | .79 |
| 8. TAT Rating | .75 |
| 6. WAIS Vocabulary | .36 (Factor I .80) |
| 3. Space Relations | .31 (Factor I .56) |

Both Hendricks, Guilford and Hoepfner's (1969) marker test and our TAT measure of DBI univocally identify this factor. A brief description of these tests may help clarify the nature of DBI. The Multiple Social Problems test requires subjects to list all the problems they can think

may arise between two people of familiar status, primarily members of a family. They are given eight minutes to complete the test and are encouraged to generate as many different problems as they can within the time limit. The test's authors suggest that subjects satisfy this requirement by producing implications from the test material. "The first implications to come are probably in (the subjects') memory store, or something very similar is there; the ones coming later have to be forced a little, hence 'produced'." (Hendricks, Guilford and Hoepfner, 1969, p. 11). Our TAT measure is quite similar. Subjects are presented with a pictoral representation of two adults, a male and female, in a relatively domestic scene. Given a 10-minute time limit, they are asked to write as many different two- or three-sentence "stories" as they can concerning what is happening between the two people in the picture. Once the first couple of stories are written, subjects must increasingly rely on their ability to produce behavioral implications. As is readily apparent, both tests aptly capture the essence of Guilford's (1967) Divergent Production of Behavioral Implications (DBI).

The presence of two tests unrelated to DBI requires comment. There does not appear to be any common trait-variance involved in these loadings. The WAIS Vocabulary and Space Relations tests seem to have little, if anything, to do with producing behavioral implications or with divergent production abilities in general. However, at least two well

established method factors in aptitude testing, guessing and speededness (Jackson, 1969), may have contributed to factor loadings. In each test mentioned, willingness to hazard a guess could be associated with performance by influencing the number of responses and, hence, the total score. In both the WAIS Vocabulary and Space Relations test few people are expected to answer every item and, obviously, the more items completed the greater the potential score. In the two DBI tests the only response limit is time. Here "guessing" can be very useful, encouraging the subject to put anything relevant down and go on so as to use his or her time most productively.

Sheer ability to work fast and efficiently may have also affected performance on these tests. The speededness factor is most relevant to the timed tests, Space Relations and DBI measures, particularly Multiple Social Problems where only two-minutes per item is optimal. Speededness may also have some bearing on WAIS Vocabulary scores. Although not a timed test, it was administered last in the battery. Slower subjects may have been less motivated to do well by the necessity to stay over time to complete their task. Many subjects were observed hurrying through this test as often

the duration of the testing period exceeded expectations.[2]

Summary of Results

Although an original correlational analysis failed to indicate the predicted convergent validity for PFQ ratings, a subsequent analysis using a subset of Absorption Scale (Subscale B) items found sufficient evidence of convergence to warrant further exploratory analysis. Results of the exploratory analysis suggested a moderate degree of construct validity for the PFQ. Factor analysis in particular demonstrated that the PFQ may indeed measure a psychometrically viable trait which is functionally independent of verbal comprehension and the divergent production of behavioral implications. Cross validation of Subscale B is necessary, however, before such a conclusion is clearly justified. Recognized measures of the other two abilities were also found to have acceptable construct validity in the present matrix of tests, particularly Wechsler's Vocabulary test.

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[2] A partial test of the hypothesis that Factor III is contaminated by method variance is available by extracting additional factors and examining the pattern of factor splitting. In a six-factor varimax solution Factor III clearly split into two readily interpretable factors consistient with the hypothesis. The two DBI tests unambiguously defined one of these factors. The second factor was defined by the Space Relations test and a small portion of the variance of the other two "performance" measures, yielding what appeared to be a (performance) method factor. Apart from what has already been offered in the way of speculation, no further interpretation of this factor is suggested.

# CHAPTER V

# DISCUSSION

No evidence of the convergent validity of PFQ ratings emerged in an initial data analysis. However, further exploratory analyses provided a tentative demonstration of the construct validity of PFQ ratings. The conditional nature of this latter demonstration deerives from two sources: the modification of the original Absorption Scale to promote convergent validity and the failure to find any significant correlation between PFQ ratings and Space Relations test scores. In the first section of this chapter, each of these qualifications will be discussed along with their implications regarding the construct validity of the PFQ. Subsequent sections will discuss additional findings and implications for future research.

## Absorbed Attentiveness and Focusing Ability

The selection of Tellegen's Absorption Scale (TAS) as a critical self-report measure in this study was primarily based on evidence that the scale measures three features of absorbed attention essential to the theoretical conceptualization of focusing ability: freedom from distraction, capacity to inhibit meta-cognition and a desire for deep involvement in the experiencing of subjective states. The first two of these features are, as we have shown, fundamental cognitive components of focusing. The

third is a motivational variable. It is believed to influence the extent to which one invests his or her attentional capacities in the focusing process. Secondarily, it was observed that some items in the scale may also tap the imagery dimension of focusing ability. These items relate to the evocation, vividness and, indirectly, the functional usefulness of images. In addition, the TAS had been shown to have sufficient construct validity for our use. Beyond being a good measure of attentional absorption, it is functionally independent of extraversion and neuroticism, the "big two" (Wiggins, 1968) in the field of personality research.

On the surface, the failure to find a significant correlation between the TAS and PFQ may cast doubt on the validity of the latter. Yet, the significant and sizable correlation between PFQ ratings and Subscale B indicates sufficient convergent validity to warrant experimental interest. It is of course difficult to determine precisely what the association with Subscale B represents since no cross-validation procedure were carried out, and, most importantly, the TAS was modified considerably to create the new scale. Items pertaining to synesthesia, dissociation, impressionability and content otherwise irrelevant or ambiguous with respect to focusing ability, were eliminated. In addition, several others items were retained but negatively keyed. Three of these indicated passive fascination with certain sensory events, while the remaining

item implied diminished verbal representational capacity. The net effect of these changes, however, was to confine the scale to aspects of attentional absorption most pertinent to focusing ability without greatly damaging its association with the TAS. The results indicate that Subscale B is highly related although not equivalent to the original absorption measure.

A careful examination of item changes also reveals a clear departure from some aspects of what the TAS measures, but does not suggest the changes are sufficient to undermine the construct validity of the PFQ. It is unlikely, for example, that the elimination of synesthesia items (e.g., "I find the different odors have different colors.") had any adverse effect on the nature of the findings. Synesthesia is a condition in which a stimulus in one sense modality is perceived as a sensation in a different modality. It is difficult to imagine how the capacity for such experience could be either a necessary or sufficient condition for the operation of features of absorbed attentiveness essential to successful focusing. Deleting these items appears simply to have eliminated irrelevant ("error") variance from the investigation.

Support for this interpretation can be found in the work of Davidson, Schwartz and Rothman (1976). These investigators present evidence which suggests that synesthetic phenomena may actually be incompatible with at

least one of the essential features of absorption, freedom from distraction. They found that, in an attentionally demanding task, high absorption subjects showed greater cortical specificity than did low absorption subjects. This difference was primarily a function of the ability of high absorbers to inhibit cortical activity in occipatal regions during attention to kinesthetic information. If high absorbers inhibit cortical activity in modality-irrelevant areas as a means of resisting distraction, then it is highly unlikely that high absorbers are capable of synesthesia under such conditions. Such a phenomenon would require facilitation of modality-irrelevant areas. Therefore, the elimination of synesthesia items (N=4) likely had no effect at least on the validity of Subscale B as a measure of freedom from distraction. Confirmation of this suggestion, however, must await future research.

The impact of changes in dissociation items is harder to determine, because of a lack of relevant research to guide speculation. Theoretically, however, the changes are consistent with the conceptualization of focusing ability and should not undermine the validity of the subscale as a measure of this skill. Tellegen and Atkinson (1974, p. 275) refer to dissociation as an experience marked by a striking "discontinuity between the usual self and the self during an episode of absorbed concentration". Items relating to this concept (e.g., "I am able to wander off into my own thoughts while doing a routine task and actually forget that I am

doing the task, and then find a few minutes later that I have actually completed it.") indicate experiences that involve a degree of "absorption" which far exceeds the demands of focusing. There is no reason to believe that aspects of absorbed attentiveness that give rise to such experiences are necessarily related to those which account for focusing ability.

Interestingly, both dissociation items and items which were subsequently deleted refer to absorption phenomena that emphasize dramatic alterations in one's usual sense of self. The additional items generally refer to aesthetic experience, mysticism and other altered states of consciousness. As with dissociation, there is no compelling reason to believe that the absorbed attentional style which accounts for focusing ability is similar to that engaged in during these particular states. Indeed, there is some evidence to suggest that at least profoundly altered states are functionally independent of focusing. Don (1977) found that during critical moments of successful focusing the characteristic EEG pattern is alpha dominant, whereas in deep meditative states and during mystical experience delta and/or theta waves appear to predominate. Thus, it may be that eliminating items referring to dramatic, but not necessarily therapeutic, alterations of self partialled out variance associated with an independent dimension of absorbed attentiveness, a dimension having perhaps more to do with meditation than experiential focusing.

The reader will recall that several items were also retained in the subscale but negatively keyed. Most of these items reflected a passive fascination with visual and other sensory events which is incompatible with focusing. Gendlin and Olsen (1970) have pointed out the critical difference between focusing with images, for example, and being fascinated by them. In the latter case imagery is captivating, commanding attention that could otherwise be directed to a personal, bodily felt sense of its significance. Focusing, on the contrary, requires flexibility to shift attention from images to just this felt significance. To focus one must be able to counter the generally strong tendency toward image fascination and, instead, actively personalize the experience. It should be added that focusing also involves an active organization of sensory experience, a process that may be suppressed or minimized in individuals whose attentional absorption tends toward passive captivation.

The major impact of reversing the scoring on sensory fascination items, other than making the scale more relevant to focusing ability, may have been a reduction in the adequacy of the subscale as a measure of hypnotizability. These items are among those originally derived from a large interview study of hypnotizable subjects (Hilgard and Hilgard, 1975). If this interpretation is correct, then a consistent pattern emerges across all item changes. It

appears that only those aspects of absorption which relate specifically to hypnotic and other such dramatic alterations of consciousness have been affected by modifications in the TAS. All such states have two things in common: the usual sense of self recedes from awareness and the individual largely merges with the object of attention. Consequently, these modifications enhanced the potential of Subscale B to assess a form of absorption in which some self-object differentiation is maintained. This is essential; since, as Gendlin (1978) points out, maintaining some "distance" from one's problem is fundamental to good focusing.

As a result of changes in the TAS, the contents of Subscale B generally reflect the kind of intense attentional involvement hypothesized to be the hallmark of successful focusing. Many items indicate an absorbed, undistractibility that directly influences the vividness and reality with which the attentional object is experienced. By implication, the content of these items also suggests an ability to suspend meta-cognition or the generation of qualifying thoughts <u>about</u> the focal abject and the nature of the associated experience. Obviously, such an analytical/evaluative stance, yielding for example judgments such as "this can't be true" or "it's only my imagination", is incompatible with the degree of involvement depicted in these items (cf. Tellegen and Atkinson, 1974). It should also be noted that items which Tellegen and Atkinson suggest express a "sentient and tolerant 'openness to experience'"

remain unchanged in this scale. These items readily indicate a desire for deep involvement in the experiencing of subjective states, a motivational variable associated with our theoretical conceptualization of focusing ability. Together with its empirical association with the TAS, these content specifications suggest Subscale B is an adequate measure of the attentional style underlying the focusing trait.

## The Space Relations Test

The Space Relations test was originally selected as a performance measure of focusing ability, because it had been shown to be an objective and valid measure of the functional usefulness of one's imagery (Bennett, Seashore and Wesman, 1966; Neisser, 1970). As the reader will recall, it is the ability to create functionally useful metaphors and images which is believed to account for the effective representation of experience during focusing (Wexler, 1974). The failure to find a significant correlation between this test and the PFQ suggests several possibilities. The theoretical speculations concerning the critical importance of the ability to manipulate and use spatial information in focusing may be incorrect. Or, the PFQ may be an inadequate measure of this dimension and thus an inadequate measure of focusing ability. Thirdly, it may be that the Space Relations test itself was an inadequate measure of spatial ability in this study.

While each of the possibilities is plausible, limitations in the use of the Space Relations test may have been particularly responsible for the present findings. In a recent review of research on imagery ability and cognitive functioning, Ernest (1977) suggests that sex differences in cognitive processing may hinder the assessment of imagery ability. She speculates that females who score high on spatial tests like Space Relations may achieve their scores for very different reasons than males. Evidence is cited that verbal and visiospatial functions are less cortically lateralized in females and it is suggested that, as a consequence, their spatial test performance may be more intimately tied to verbal processing. The possibility that the Space Relations test may not be an adequate measure of imagery ability in females is of considerable importance. The excessive abundance of females in this study (N=45) may account for the lack of association between PFQ ratings and Space Relations test scores. Interestingly, Wack (1972) found a significant correlation between these two tests in a sample more equally balanced with regard to sex. This limitation points to the need to control for the effects of sex differences in future studies of this kind.

Additional methodological problems arise in conjunction with the Space Relations test and the "functional usefulness" notion. Originally, it was assumed that Wexler's (1974a, 1974b) hypothesis regarding the representational

efficiency of metaphors and images was directly translatable into "usefulness" terms. That is, it was assumed, with regard to images, that a measure of the ability to use spatial information effectively (i.e. the Space Relations test) was a valid index of one's ability to generate images that efficiently handle emotionally relevant information. However, even if visualization skills are used to solve Space Relations problems, it is still an open question whether or not these same skills are required to construct visual forms to efficiently organize and represent bodily experience. The kind of imagery ability involved here may be specific to sensory modalities other than visual and may involve operations other than spatial manipulation. Given this qualification and the validity problems discussed above, the lack of a significant correlation between the Space Relations measure and the PFQ should be viewed with caution. Other, more appropriate instruments may yet be employed to test the validity of the PFQ as a measure of representational efficiency.

Verbal Comprehension, Divergent Production and the PFQ

The findings indicate that, as expected, PFQ ratings were completely independent of scores on verbal comprehension and DBI measures. The lack of association with verbal comprehension will be considered first. The functional independence of PFQ ratings and verbal comprehension scores was predicted on the basis of

implications from psychotherapy research and focusing training. It was noted that there was no evidence that sophisticated verbal skills were necessary for optimal experiencing and, most importantly, that improvements in focusing ability did not appear to depend upon enhancing verbal skills. Both observations point to the unrelatedness of these two abilities. Confirmation of this hypothesis suggests that there is a sizable component of nonverbal skill involved in focusing ability. The finding is consistent with the present theoretical conceptualization, emphasizing as it does attentional style and imagery ability.

The lack of association with DBI suggests that the relatively nonverbal skill assessed by the PFQ is unique in the area of "behavioral" problem-solving abilities. This uniqueness was predicted on the basis of the different kind of information dealt with during these respective operations. Although both involve elaborating upon available information to solve a problem, focusing utilizes one's personal, bodily sense of it while divergent production of behavioral implications employs one's general knowledge of others. Interestingly, Zimring and Balcombe (1974) also found no relationship between a measure of elaboration involving an other-referent form of behabioral information and PFQ ratings. Guilford (1967) suggests that these two forms of information are distinctly different and thus require distinctly different abilities to handle them. Quite

a number of behavioral abilities have been established for the awareness of others, but none have been determined for the awareness of self (Guilford and Hoepfner, 1971). The present finding supports Guilford's contention that utilizing different forms of behavioral information involves different abilities. It furthermore implies that the PFQ may be assessing one (or more) of the behavioral abilities Guilford and his colleagues have yet to "discover".

## Implications for Future Research

It may be fruitful in the future to examine focusing ability in terms of other of Guilford's hypothesized abilities. Tests of these abilities may be used to further assess the validity of the PFQ. Designing independent, objectively scorable tests of self-knowledge skills, however, poses a major challenge to investigators. Validating subjective experience has been traditionally an extraordinarily difficult task. The fact that Guilford and his associates have yet to investigate this area despite their massive armamentarium of tests and testing experience is testimony to the extent of the problems involved. Whether or not these difficulties are surmountable need not determine the direction of future research. Continued exploration of the attentional style and representational efficiency dimensions specified in this investigation may proceed independently.

Research is needed to replicate the present findings and also develop Subscale B as a measure of the attentional style involved in focusing ability. With regard to the latter issue, for example, it is important to further demonstrate the adequacy of the subscale as a measure of selective attention by examining the relationship between it and other selectivity measures, such as the Embedded Figures and Rod and Frame Tests (Silverman, 1970; Witkin and Goodenough, 1976). It should be noted that both of these alternative measures have been found to be associated with focusing ability (Gendlin et al., 1968; Vanden Bos, 1973), although the relationship does not appear to be a simple linear one. In addition, items should be added to enhance the theoretical consistency of the scale, particularly with regard to inhibition of meta-cognition. Subsequent factor analyses of the items may determine the relative independence of absorption features and provide a provisional basis for examining the extent to which PFQ ratings assess each theoretically essential feature.

Additional research is needed to examine dimensions of absorbed attentiveness other than selectivity or freedom from distraction that may influence focusing ability. Selective attention appears to be primarily important to stop mind-wandering and initially zero in on the felt sense of one's problem (Gendlin, 1978). Beyond that, for example, one must also be able to inhibit efforts at rational analysis or evaluation of the moment-to-moment outcomes of

focusing. Such meta-cognitive efforts merely distract from a full appreciation of feelings-as-such and typically encourage conceptualizations of experience to be distorted by inadequate interpretive sets (Gendlin, 1964, 1973, 1978). Inhibition of these reflective states may be necessary to faciltate the physiological effects of focusing (cf. Don, 1977) as well as help "unfreeze" one's problem-solving attempts from habitual, unproductive cycles. Further research is necessary to verify these hypotheses.

Research also needs to continue to examine the relationship between representational efficiency and focusing ability. Apart from becoming absorbed in the richness of bodily experience, good focusers must be able to efficiently and effectively represent it if the full benefits of focusing are to be realized. It is believed that individual differences in the capacity to generate functionally useful metaphors and images largely determine the success of these representational efforts. Though the attempt to assess this dimension of focusing ability was unsuccessful, there is indirect evidence to support our contention. Olsen (1975) has shown that instruction in the production and use of images during focusing dramatically enhances focusing ability. Further research is necessary to more adequately assess representational efficiency and this aspect of the construct validity of the PFQ.

Plans are currently underway to improve upon the

measurement of both dimensions of focusing ability emphasized in the present investigation. It is hoped that efforts such as these will eventually lead to a thorough understanding of the nature and assessment of this skill. The closer we come to achieving such a goal, the closer we may be to effectively diagnosing and treating impediments to successful focusing and, perhaps, successful psychotherapy as well.

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# APPENDIX A

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS TO SUBJECTS

Session 1

Before we begin today, I would like to thank each one of you for participating in this research project. Your involvement will make it possible to more adequately help people seeking personal counselling and psychotherapy. In addition, your participation here is an important step toward the design of personal growth training methods which can be taught on a large-scale basis. Eventually, I hope such training will be offered in our public and private schools.

I wish also to remind you that all your responses to the questionnaires will be totally confidential. As a matter of fact all your statements will be written and, essentially, anonymous. All that will be asked of you is to print your initials, birth date, place of testing and current date on any research materials. Your initials are asked for simply to make sure we do not get questionnaires from different people mixed up when we record your replies.

Also, if at any time you either CAN NOT or DO NOT WISH TO COMPLY with what I or the questionnaires ask of you, please feel free to stop. You may merely write VOID (write on board) across the questionnaire, and show it to me after the session is completed. I will pay you for your time to that point. No explanations are necessary nor will any be asked of you.

Are there any questions?

Session 2

Today I'm going to show you a new way of thinking about personal problems that has been found to be helpful to people. This method is called "Focusing", and it is very different from the usual way we think about our problems.

First of all, focusing involves a sharp and complete shift in direction from ordinary thinking. Instead of talking at yourself inside trying to tell yourself what the problem is all about, you remain quiet, relaxed and simply listen to your body. By "listening to your body" I mean you will wait silently inside so that the way the problem feels in your body becomes clear to you.

Secondly, focusing involves a sensing of the whole problem, all of its many sides, all at once. Usually, we think we already know what the main part of the problem is, so we concentrate on that and ignore everything else. Or, we take the problem one part at a time and try to decide what's most important. In focusing you pay attention to what the whole problem feels like and don't decide what's important or not important. You feel it all, all at once, and don't decide anything. You wait and let what's important come freshly from how it feels in your body.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, in focusing you let thoughts, the words and pictures in your mind, come right out of the feeling. As we all know words and pictures

come anyway; we can't sit silently for long without our thinking of something. But there's a way of letting all your thoughts go by, except just those that seem to come right from the feeling, the ones that seem to perfectly match how you feel. Focusing is doing just that, staying with the bodily feeling and following it and the words and pictures that seem to come right from it.

Are there any questions?

Ok. Now in a few moments I will read focusing instructions to you. We will go through them once to get use to the procedure, talk about it for a moment, and then try it again.

These instructions will ask you in a very special way to:

1. Relax.
2. Think about a personal problem.
3. Feel the whole sense of that problem in your body.
4. Let a picture form in your minds eye out of that feeling.
5. Do not ask yourself what the picture means but <u>let it affect you</u>.
6. Follow the feeling the picture brings.
7. Find words or pictures to capture the fresh or new way you feel about this problem.

These 7 points are not the instructions. They are simply to let you know what we are going to do.

Are there any questions?

Alright, lie back for a moment in your chair and relax. Take a few deep breaths and close your eyes. (Administer focusing instructions.)

# APPENDIX B

# EXPERIMENTAL TESTS

Name _____
Birth Date _____
Place of Testing _____
Date _____

## SELF RATINGS OF PERFORMANCE

On the following pages you will find two questions. Each question asks you to rate your own ability in a specific area. Notice that each question is preceded by a description of the ability to be rated and sample items from a recognized test of that ability. Please read the description carefully and study the items shown before rating your own ability in that particular area.

I. Verbal Comprehension

A. Verbal comprehension is the ability to draw meaning from words. Persons with high ability in this area have a large vocabulary and define even uncommon words rather easily.

B. A good test of verbal comprehension is a vocabulary test in which one is asked to supply meanings for a great variety of words. The following are sample items from a widely used vocabulary test:

"What does repair mean?"

"What does remorse mean?"

"What does travesty mean?"

(The examinee is required to supply an oral or written definition of each word.)

C. Place a check mark in the appropriate space that most accurately describes your own estimate of your verbal comprehension ability.

| : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Very Much Below Average: | Quite Below Average: | Slightly Below Average: | Average | Slightly Above Average: | Quite Above Average: | Very Much Above Average: |
| In the Lower 10% of People my Age | In the Lower 25% of People my Age | In the Lower 40% of People my Age | | In the Upper 40% of People my age | In the Upper 25% of People my age | In the Upper 10% of People my age |

## II. Creative Social Thinking

A. Creative social thinking is the ability to imagine a wide variety of problems which may develop in ordinary human relationships. Persons with high ability in this area can quickly think up a large number of problems that any two people can have with each other. In addition, they are able to draw out possibilities concerning personal problems that are not obvious to many people.

B. The following are sample items from a recognized test of creative social thinking:

> "Given two members of a typical family, write many different problems that they may have with each other. The problems should involve the feelings, thoughts and attitudes of the two given people."
>
> 1. What personal problems can the BROTHER and SISTER have with each other?
>
> 2. What personal problems can the MOTHER and FATHER have with each other?
>
> 3. What personal problems can the PARENTS and CHILDREN have with each other?

(The examinee is given approximately two minutes per item to list as many different problems as he or she can imagine.)

C. Place a check mark in the appropriate space that most accurately describes your own estimate of your creative social thinking ability.

| : | : | : | : | : | : | : |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Very Much Below Average: | Quite Below Average: | Slightly Below Average: | Average | Slightly Above Average: | Quite Above Average: | Very Much Above Average: |
| In the Lower 10% of People my Age | In the Lower 25% of People my Age | In the Lower 40% of People my Age | | In the Upper 40% of People my Age | In the Upper 25% of People my Age | In the Upper 10% of People my Age |

Name _____
Birth Date _____
Place of Testing _____
Date _____

DESCRIPTION OF EMOTIONS

On the following pages you will find the names of four emotional experiences. You are asked to describe these feelings as completely and in as much detail as possible. Do not describe your own personal experiences as a means of explaining the meaning of these terms. Simply describe their common meaning to people in general, as you would in describing the meaning of any other word. If you need more space to write, please use the back of the page.

1. Deep Sorrow

2. Jealousy

3. Joy

4. Loneliness

TAT Instructions

I'm going to give each of you a card with a picture on it. Please do not turn it over to look at the picture until I tell you to BEGIN.

(Hand out cards)

DO NOT BEGIN YET

Now, on this card is a scene with two people in it. Most of us can imagine many different stories that would describe what could be happening in this picture. What I would like you to do is to write as many different stories as possible about what could be happening between these two people. You need not write down complete stories, but in 2 or 3 sentences, give me enough information so I know what you are talking about. In your stories include the thoughts and feelings of the two people.

You will have 10 minutes to write as many different stories as you can imagine.

Remember, include the thoughts and the feelings of the two people in each story.

Alright, BEGIN.

Name _____
Birth Date _____
Place of Testing _____
Date _____

MULTIPLE SOCIAL PROBLEMS

PLEASE DO NOT BEGIN UNTIL YOU ARE ASKED TO DO SO.

On the following pages you will find four questions, three in PART I and one in PART II. You will be given EIGHT MINUTES from the time you are told to begin to complete all four questions. Please stop immediately when time is called. If you need more space to list your answers, please use the back of the page.

PART I: Given two members of a typical family, describe many different personal problems that they might have with each other. The problems should involve the feelings, thoughts, and attitudes of the two given people. Please describe each of these problems in one or two sentences so that the kind of problem you are referring to is quite clear.

1. What personal problems can the BROTHER and SISTER have with each other?

2. What personal problems can the MOTHER and FATHER have with each other?

3. What personal problems can the PARENTS and CHILDREN have with each other?

PART II: Given two people, describe many different personal problems that they might have with each other. The problems should involve the feelings, thoughts, and attitudes of the two given people. Please describe each of these problems in one or two sentences so that the kind of problem you are referring to is quite clear.

1. What personal problems can a BOY and his GIRLFRIEND have with each other?

Give the meaning of each of the following words:

1. Winter

2. Repair

3. Breakfast

4. Fabric

5. Slice

6. Assemble

7. Conceal

8. Enormous

9. Hasten

10. Sentence

11. Regulate

12. Commence

13. Ponder

14. Cavern

15. Designate

16. Domestic

17. Consume

18. Terminate

19. Obstruct

20. Remorse

21. Sanctuary

22. Matchless

23. Reluctant

24. Calamity

25. Fortitude

26. Tranquil

27. Edifice

28. Compassion

29. Tangible

30. Perimeter

31. Audacious

32. Ominous

33. Tirade

34. Encumber

35. Plagiarize

36. Impale

37. Travesty

# Differential Personality Questionnaire

In this booklet you will find a series of statements a person might use to describe her/his attitudes, opinions, interests, and other characteristics.

Each statement is followed by two choices, lettered (a) and (b) in the booklet (but lettered T and F on the answer sheet). Read the statement and decide which choice best describes you. Then mark your answer on the answer sheet.

In marking your answers on the answer sheet, be sure that the number of the statement in the booklet is the same as the number on the answer sheet.

Please answer <u>every statement</u>, even if you are not completely sure of the answer.

Read each statement carefully, but don't spend too much time deciding on the answer.

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THIS BOOKLET!!

1. When I work on a committee, I like to take charge of things. (a) True (b) False
2. Sometimes I feel and experience things as I did when I was a child. (a) True (b) False
3. I can be greatly moved by eloquent or poetic language. (a) True (b) False
4. I keep close track of where my money goes. (a) True (b) False
5. I usually prefer to spend my leisure time with friends rather than alone. (a) True (b) False
6. My table manners are not always perfect. (a) True (b) False
7. While watching a movie, a T.V. show, or a play, I may become so involved that I forget about myself and my surroundings and experience the story as if it were real and as if I were taking part in it. (a) True (b) False
8. If I stare at a picture and then look away from it, I can sometimes "see" an image of the picture, almost as if I were still looking at it. (a) True (b) False
9. Sometimes I feel as if my mind could envelop the whole world. (a) True (b) False
10. If people criticize me, I usually point out their own weaknesses. (a) True (b) False
11. I am just naturally cheerful. (a) True (b) False
12. I like to watch cloud shapes change in the sky. (a) True (b) False
13. Of the following two situations I would like least: (a) Running a steam presser in a laundry for a week, (b) Being caught in a blizzard
14. If I wish, I can imagine (or daydream) some things so vividly that they hold my attention as a good movie or story does. (a) True (b) False
15. Some people go out of their way to keep me from getting ahead. (a) True (b) False
16. My feelings are hurt rather easily. (a) True (b) False
17. I think I really know what some people mean when they talk about mystical experiences. (a) True (b) False
18. I sometimes "step outside" my usual self and experience an entirely different state of being. (a) True (b) False
19. Textures - such as wool, sand, wood - sometimes remind me of colors or music. (a) True (b) False
20. Sometimes I experience things as if they were doubly real. (a) True (b) False
21. I don't like having to tell people what to do. (a) True (b) False
22. When I listen to music, I can get so caught up in it that I don't notice anything else. (a) True (b) False
23. Smooth is most like: (a) Rough (b) Soft
24. I could be happy living all alone in a cabin in the woods or mountains. (a) True (b) False
25. My future looks very bright to me. (a) True (b) False
26. I am always disgusted with the law when a criminal is freed through the arguments of a smart lawyer. (a) True (b) False
27. If I wish, I can imagine that my body is so heavy that I could not move it if I wanted to. (a) True (b) False

28. I can often somehow sense the presence of another person before I actually see or hear her/him. (a) True (b) False

29. Of the following two situations I would like least: (a) Being in a bank when suddenly three masked men with guns come in and make everyone raise their hands, (b) Sitting through a two-hour concert of bad music.

30. When someone hurts me, I try to retaliate (get even). (a) True (b) False

31. The crackle and flames of a wood fire stimulate my imagination. (a) True (b) False

32. I see no point in sticking with a problem if there is little chance of success. (a) True (b) False

33. I like to be in the spotlight. (a) True (b) False

34. It is sometimes possible for me to be completely immersed in nature or in art and to feel as if my whole state of consciousness has somehow been temporarily altered. (a) True (b) False

35. Different colors have distinctive and special meanings for me. (a) True (b) False

36. I am able to wander off into my own thoughts while doing a routine task and actually forget that I am doing the task, and then find a few minutes later that I have completed it. (a) True (b) False

37. I can sometimes recollect certain past experiences in my life with such clarity and vividness that it is like living them again or almost so. (a) True (b) False

38. Things that might seem meaningless to others often make sense to me. (a) True (b) False

39. When faced with a decision, I usually take time to consider and weigh all aspects. (a) True (b) False

40. While acting in a play, I think I could really feel the emotions of the character and "become" her/him for the time being, forgetting both myself and the audience. (a) True (b) False

41. I get "rattled" easily at critical moments. (a) True (b) False

42. I have always been extremely courageous in facing difficult situations. (a) True (b) False

43. My thoughts often don't occur as words but as visual images. (a) True (b) False

44. I often take delight in small things (like the five-pointed star shape that appears when you cut an apple across the core or the colors in soap bubbles). (a) True (b) False

45. Many people try to push me around. (a) True (b) False

46. When listening to organ music or other powerful music, I sometimes feel as if I am being lifted into the air. (a) True (b) False

47. Sometimes I can change noise into music by the way I listen to it. (a) True (b) False

48. As young people grow up they ought to try to carry out some of their rebellious ideas instead of just settling down. (a) True (b) False

49. Some of my most vivid memories are called up by scents and smells. (a) True (b) False

50. When I am unhappy about something, (a) I tend to seek the company of a friend, (b) I prefer to be alone.

51. It might be enjoyable and exciting to experience an earthquake. (a) True (b) False

52. Certain pieces of music remind me of pictures or moving patterns of color. (a) True (b) False

53. I often know what someone is going to say before he or she says it. (a) True (b) False

54. It is easy for me to become enthusiastic about things I am doing. (a) True (b) False

55. I play hard and I work hard. (a) True (b) False

56. I enjoy violent movies. (a) True (b) False

57. I often have "physical memories"; for example, after I've been swimming I may still feel as if I'm in the water. (a) True (b) False

58. The sound of a voice can be so fascinating to me that I can just go on listening to it. (a) True (b) False

59. I often become irritated over little annoyances. (a) True (b) False

60. At times I somehow feel the presence of someone who is not physically there. (a) True (b) False

61. Sometimes my thoughts and images come to me without the slightest effort on my part. (a) True (b) False

62. I find the different odors have different colors. (a) True (b) False

63. Slow resembles: (a) Sluggish, (b) Fast

64. I can be deeply moved by a sunset. (a) True (b) False

SUBSCALE A

2. Sometimes I feel and experience things as I did when I was a child. (a) True (b) False

7. While watching a movie, a T.V. show, or a play, I may become so involved that I forget about myself and my surroundings and experience the story as if it were real and as if I were taking part in it. (a) True (b) False

8. If I stare at a picture and then look away from it, I can sometimes "see" an image of the picture, almost as if I were still looking at it. (a) True (b) False

9. Sometimes I feel as if my mind could envelop the world. (a) True (b) False

12. I like to watch cloud shapes change in the sky. (a) True (b) False

18. I sometimes "step outside" my usual self and experience an entirely different state of being. (a) True (b) False

*22. When I listen to music, I can get so caught up in it that I don't notice anything else. (a) True (b) False

31. The crackle and flames of a wood fire stimulate my imagination. (a) True (b) False

34. It is sometimes possible for me to be completely immersed in nature or in art and to feel as if my whole state of consciousness has somehow been temporarily altered. (a) True (b) False

*43. My thoughts often don't occur as words but as visual images. (a) True (b) False

44. I often take delight in small things (like the five-pointed star shape that appears when you cut an apple cross the core or the colors in soap bubbles). (a) True (b) False

46. When listening to organ music or other powerful music, I sometimes feel as if I am being lifted into the air. (a) True (b) False

* Negatively keyed

SUBSCALE B

2. SOmetimes I feel and experience things as I did when I was a child. (a) True (b) False

7. While watching a movie, a T.V. show, or a play, I may become so involved that I forget about myself and my surroundings and experience the story as if it were real and as if I were taking part in it. (a) True (b) False

8. If I stare at a picture and then look away from it, I can sometimes "see" an image of the picture, almost as if I were looking at it. (a) True (b) False

9 Sometimes I feel as if my mind could envelop the whole world. (a) True (b) False

12. I like to watch cloud shapes change in the sky. (a) True (b) False

*14. If I wish, I can imagine (or daydream) some things so vividly that they hold my attention as a good movie or story does. (a) True (b) False

18. I sometimes "step outside" my usual self and experience an entirely different state of being. (a) True (b) False

*22. When I listen to music, I can get so caught up in it that I don't notice anything else. (a) True (b) False

28. I can often somehow sense the presence of another person before I actually see or hear her/him. (a) True (b) False

31. The crackle and flames of a wood fire stimulate my imagination. (a) True (b) False

34. It is sometimes possible for me to be completely immersed in nature or in art and to feel as if my whole state of consciousness has somehow been temporarily altered. (a) True (b) False

43. My thoughts often don't occur as words but as visual images. (a) True (b) False

44. I often take delight in small things (like the five-pointed star shape that appears when you cut an apple across the core or the colors in soap bubbles). (a) True (b) False

46. When listening to organ music or other powerful music, I sometimes feel as if I am being lifted into the air. (a) True (b) False

47. Sometimes I can change noise into music by the way I listen to it. (a) True (b) False

49. SOme of my most vivid memories are called up by scents smells. (a) True (b) False

53. I often know what someone is going to say before he or she says it. (a) True (b) False

57. I often have "physical memories"; for example, after I've been swimming I may still feel as if I'm in the water. (a) True (b) False

*58. The sound of a voice can be so fascinating to me that I can just go on listening to it. (a) True (b) False

61. Sometimes my thoughts and images come to me without the slightest effort on my part. (a) True (b) False

* Negatively keyed

LEAF 153 OMITTED IN PAGE NUMBERING.

## Revised Focusing Manual

This is going to be just to yourself. What I will ask you to do will to be silent, just to yourself. Take a moment to relax... a nice clearing breath... just kind of getting comfortable inside... (5-10 seconds). All right, ---now quetly, just to yourself, I would like you to pay attention to a very special part of you... Pay attention to that part where you usually feel things, where you usually feel mad, sad, glad or scared... (5-10 seconds). Pay attention there and see how you are now. See what comes when you ask yourself, "How do I feel?", "What is the main thing for me right now?"... 30 seconds...

If, among the things you thought of there was a major personal problem which felt important, continue with it. Otherwise, select a meaningful personal problem that seem really important to you... (10 seconds). Now, of course, there are many parts to that one thing you are thinking about... too many to think of each one alone, but you can feel all of these things together. Pay attention to where you usually feel things and get a sense of what all of the problem feels like. Let yourself feel all that just as a sensation in your body... (15 seconds). Just stay with that whole sense of it, just how it feels there in your body... (15 seconds).

Now, as you feel it, let an image, a picture come out of that feeling. Don't force it. Nothing particular has to happen. Just let yourself be surprised with whatever appears... (15 seconds). Whatever comes from the feeling, don't ask yourself what it means; just let it affect you. Look at it. Look at every bit of it and just let it affect you.

...20-30 seconds...

Now, let yourself move back down where you feel things and get a sense of the one special feeling the picture brings... Let yourself pay attention to that one feeling. Nothing to do but just pay attention to it.

...1 minute...

Keep following that feeling, paying attention to it... Let all else go by, let it drift on by as you pay attention to that one feeling... (30 seconds). Don't let it be just words or pictures. Stay with the feeling. Wait. Let the words or pictures come right from it.

...30 seconds...

If that one feeling changes, or moves, let it do that. Whatever it does, follow the feeling and pay attention to it... (30 seconds). Stay with the feeling and the words or pictures that come right from it.

...30 seconds...

Now, gently take what is fresh, a new, in the feel of it now, what feels different somehow from where you started... and go very easy. Just as you feel it, try to find some new words or pictures to capture what your present feeling is all about. There doesn't have to be anything you didn't know before. New words or pictures are best, but old ones might fit just as well. As long as you now find words or pictures to say what is fresh to you now.

...1 minute...

If the words or pictures you now have make some fresh difference to you, see what that is. Let the words or pictures change until they feel just right in capturing your feeling.

...1 minute...

Now I will give you a little while to use in any way you want to, and then we will stop.

# APPENDIX C

## JUDGES' RATING MANUALS

PFQ Scoring Manual

SCORE 1: when you are sure the subject did not focus at all.

A score of 1 is indicated when:

(a) S's protocol either explicitly states or implies that dissociated, random thought sequences dominated the focusing attempt.

Examples:

1. Explicitly stated: "I let my mind wander from place to place. No one feeling or problem held my attention."

2. Implicitly stated: "I was thinking of a personal problem but kept getting side-tracked on other smaller less important problems which might have been related to the one thing I was thinking of. I'm not sure. I didn't get no words or pictures, but I did get music ranging from rock to folk to blues."

(b) S answers "yes" to question 7 and the rater is uncertain as to whether a score of 1 or 2 is justified. If, however, the rater believes that a rating of 2 or greater is definitely indicated, the answer to question 7 may be disregarded. The answer is to be used only as a last resort when ratings of 1 or 2 cannot otherwise be determined.

(c) the presence of secondary emotions such as guilt and anxiety preclude continuing with focusing.

Example: "Anxiety reactions surfaced. I was unable to go through with the technique. I listened to the researcher, but did not participate."

(d) protocol reveals S experienced a deep state of relaxation which precluded active engagement in focusing.

SCORE 2: when protocol demonstrates that S thought about a problem, was able to continue concentrating on that particular problem, but did not gain a clear bodily felt sense of the problem.

A score of 2 is indicated when:

(a) the protocol makes no reference to immediate bodily felt reactions having played a significant role in

S's concentration on his or her problem.

Examples:

1. S is merely preoccupied with thoughts about or images of aspects of the problem: when it occurs, who is involved and what was, might have or should have been done.

2. S is merely preoccupied with finding or simply reciting reasons for his or her problem, such as: "I was just letting my reactions come and go and then thinking why I thought that."

3. S is merely preoccupied with finding a solution independent of any direct reference to the bodily felt sense of it. S may say something such as: "I thought about the problem and started seeing how I would have to solve it. I know now exactly what I have to do."

(b) S answers "No" to question 7 and the rater is uncertain as to whether a score of 1 or 2 is justified. If, however, the rater believes that a rating other than 2 is definitely indicated, the answer to question 7 may be disregarded. The answer is to be used only as a last resort when ratings of 1 or 2 cannot otherwise be determined.

SCORE 3: when protocol demonstrates that S focused on a specific bodily felt meaning (i.e., a feeling which seems to have an existence independent of the words or images which refer to it and to which S can repeatedly refer), but did not elaborate that feeling or reformulate the problem as a consequence.

A score of 3 is indicated when:

(a) the protocol shows that S's attention to problem relevant body sensations generated, but did not go beyond, a wholistic felt sense of the problem. Such an experience is indicated by S's predominate use of global, nonspecific descriptions of feelings. Frequently-used descriptions of these feelings include the following terms: heavy, dull, uneasy, scary, mixed-up, tight. The terms used lend an unfinished or incomplete quality to the feeling being described.

(b) protocol reveals S attended to problem relevant body sensations even though he or she could not

find words or images to represent them. Despite being conceptually vague, the bodily sense of the problem appears to have been distinctly felt.

Example: "I felt this strange sense of the problem inside. I could clearly feel it but no words or pictures came. I don't know what it is, but it's real enough."

(c) the protocol shows that attention to problem relevant body sensation led to a sharpening of feeling (i.e., it was occasioned by an increase in S's awareness of the feeling as a distinct feeling, making it appear stronger, clearer or more vivid) without its becoming more complex or differentiated.

(d) S's continuous concentration on a specific problem and "direct reference" to problem relevant body sensations appears to have led to some felt release or tension relief, although the feeling did not actually change or become articulated in any significant manner.

Example: "I felt very relaxed and let my mind experience the sensations related to something which has been a source of stress. The feeling changed very little, but some of the tension that came with it seemed to dissipate."

(e) the protocol indicates that the object of S's attention shifted from a momentary sharpening relevant feeling to one or other of the following reactions:

1. S's emotional appraisal of the feeling. S thus becomes preoccupied with the emotional reaction and fails to re-focus on the immediate bodily experience to which he or she is reacting.

Example: "I began to feel how really uneasy this problem makes me. Then I became angry. I hate feeling this way. The more I felt it the angrier I got. It was a frustrating experience, although somehow that uneasy feeling is clearer to me now."

2. S attempts to cognitively "understand" the meaning of an image formed from S's felt sense. Such searches for meaning preclude directly attending to the effect of the image in sharpening the original felt sense, and thereby inhibit subsequent "unfolding".

3.

S's attention to problem relevant body sensations or the images or words which represent them engenders anxiety, confusion and avoidance.

Note: do not score 3 for all references to emotion, and brief or vague body sensations. To qualify for a score of 3, protocols must demonstrate a felt relatedness of sensations to the problem, attention to a global or "wholistic" felt sense of the problem, and continuity of problem focus. Otherwise, reported body sensations are considered products of dissociated, irrelevant thought sequences or secondary emotional reactions.

SCORE 4: when protocol indicates S focused on a specific bodily felt meaning and elaborated its significance with words and/or images, but there is no indication of "referent movement", a distinct change in the quality of the felt referent.

A score of 4 is indicated when:

(a) the protocol shows S rather spontaneously shifted back and forth between a felt sense of the problem and symbols which strengthen and clarify the feeling. However, the clarification process is not carried through to a reformulation of the problem or major change in the quality of the feeling.

Example: "The one problem stayed and wouldn't go away. The feeling seemed to become more precise as the words shuffled. It seemed clearer and clearer as first one, then another, word appeared. I was surprised how automatically it seemed to happen. The problem really didn't change though. I just understood it better."

(b) the protocol shows that S's attempt to represent a felt sense of the problem operates under a self-propelled process, i.e., certain classes of words or images persist or spontaneously reappear to strengthen the feeling, although referent movement does not occur.

Example: "I had a feeling which I felt in the middle or center of my body. I saw many pictures which I formed words for. Then I started to notice that certain thoughts kept coming back in different words and pictures that would make my feeling stronger."

(c) protocol shows that S's bodily felt sense of the

problem "opened up" during focusing, giving rise to a multiplicity of aspects hitherto unknown or considered less "real". Although certain aspects of the problem now stand out in a unique way, problem differentiation at this stage does not give S a sense that the meaning of his or her problem has essentially changed.

Example: "I began to realize several aspects of my problem I hadn't paid much attention to before. I sort of knew they were there but wasn't sure they weren't just my imagination. I know they are there now."

(d) protocol shows that S's global rather generalized felt sense of the problem gradually became more and more specific through continued attention and the emergence of appropriate words and/or images, even though S demonstrates that the felt referent remains unchanged. Here scoring is determined by the specificity of language forms used by S in describing feeling.

Note: Explicit statements that S underwent a kind of self-propelled feeling process, whose outcome was neither chosen nor predicted, are sufficient conditions for a score of at least 4.

SCORE 5: when the protocol demonstrates that S distinctly feels a change in the quality of the felt referent as a result of focusing, i.e., the current felt meaning about his or her problem is a quite different one. S's problem has been reformulated.

A score of 5 is indicated when:

(a) the protocol shows S has been pulled along in a direction he or she neither chose nor predicted and has encountered a distinct experiential change in the problem. This change involves a considerable relief of tension.

(b) protocol demonstrates that S has gained a "new sense" of the problem. This is not simply a clarification of the problem (e.g., as in a score of 3 or 4) but an indication that the way S looks at and symbolizes the felt referent is distinctly different. In essence the problem is reformulated in such a way that it is now a different problem.

Scoring Manual for TAT Protocols

I. Conceptual understanding of cognitive ability to be rated - Guilford's DIVERGENT PRODUCTION OF BEHAVIORAL IMPLICATIONS (DBI)

A. Background information - DBI is one of the many "divergent production" (DP) or cognitive elaboration abilities in Guilford's (1967) Structure of Intellect Model.

1. Formal definition of DP - the "generation of information from given information, where the emphasis is upon variety and quantity of output."

2. DBI is distinguished from other DP abilities by virtue of the type of information content being handled (behavioral information) and the kind of product or output being generated (implications).

(a) behavioral information is defined as "information, essentially nonverbal, involved in human interactions, where awareness of attention, perceptions, thoughts, desires, feelings, moods, emotions, intentions and actions of other people and ourselves is important."

(b) implications are expectations, anticipations or predictions one forms on the basis of given information.

1. In Guilford's marker test for DBI, Multiple Social Problems, the " given information" is what Ss already know about interactions between two people of familiar status, e.g., "What personal problems can a BROTHER and SISTER have with each other?"

2. In the protocols to be rated, the given information is the pictoral cues on the TAT card, particularly postural and gestural cues of the two people.

B. Essentially, DBI is the ability to generate a variety of anticipations as to the thoughts, feelings and intentions that may arise in any given human interaction, particularly on the basis of nonverbal, expressive cues.

II. How to score protocols

A. Determine how many discriminably different stories S was able to generate.

1. To qualify for consideration as a scorable story, S's narrative must explicitly describe or clearly imply the thoughts, feelings, intentions or expressive actions of at least one of the characters.

(a) Stated or clearly implied "behavioral" content may be related to the character's self- concerns, be about the other in the picture, other(s) outside the picture, any two or all three of these possibilities.

(b) Sheer descriptions of "externals" such as setting do not qualify as scorable stories, e.g., "A man and a woman are standing in the kitchen of their house. They live in a lower class neighbourhood."

(c) Descriptions interpersonally neutral or impersonal acts do not qualify as scorable stories, e.g., "Two people together at home. The guy is looking off in the distance."

2. To qualify as discriminably different, a story must evidence at least one of the following conditions in relation to its comparison:

(a) a different agent of action

(b) different thoughts involved

(c) different feelings involved

(d) different intentions involved

(e) different overt actions or reactions on the part of participants in the action

B. Score the amount of elaboration of "behavioral information", i.e., thoughts, feelings, intentions, etc. in each discriminably different story.

1. Rate elaboration in terms of POOR-MODERATE-GOOD.

(a) POOR: There is little description of character(s) internal states or expressive actions. The rater must infer much of this from what S implies about the character(s).

(b) MODERATE: S explicitly describes some feeling, thought, intention or expressive action but clearly could have said more in the three sentences allowed.

(c) GOOD: S makes good use of a maximum of three sentences to emphasize the internal states or expressive behavior of the character(s).

2. Do not give extra credit for verbal skill or literary sophistication.

(a)
Note: S was told to use only 2 or 3 sentences to "give me enough information so that I know what you're talking about."

(b)
S was encouraged not to write elaborate or aesthetically pleasing stories. Such embellishment involves abilities quite different from DBI.

3. Do not give extra credit for interpersonal complexity, i.e., bringing in characters from outside of the picture.

4. Do not give extra credit for use of additional time frames (e.g., past or future) or embellishments of set or setting.

(a) S was simply asked for descriptions of the present scene, not what led up to it or how it will turn out as in the standard TAT format.

5. Do give credit for and principal attention to how S concretely elaborates upon the character'(s') possible experience and expression given the available visual cues.

C. Once each story is rated, average the ratings so that the entire protocol receives a POOR-MODERATE-GOOD rating.

D. Once the number of discriminably different stories are totalled and the entire protocol rates (e.g., 12-moderate), a scale value of 1 to 7 is to be assigned.

1. The final 1 to 7 rating is to be determined by an equal weighting of number of stories and degree of "behavioral" elaboration.

2. When assigning the final rating note that the scale values have the following meaning:

   1 = Very Much Below Average;
   Bottom 10% of people S's age

   2 = Quite Below Average;
   Bottom 25% of people S's age

   3 = Slightly Below Average;
   Bottom 40% of people S's age

   4 = Average

   5 = Slightly Above Average;
   Top 40% of people S's age

   6 = Quite Above Average;
   Top 25% of people S's age

   7 = Very Much Above Average;
   Top 10% of people S's age

Note: There are no established norms for this type of TAT performance. Therefore, final ratings are global judgments of the raters. The only possible guideline is Guilford's norms for the Multiple Social Problems Test (a copy of this test is appended to this manual). Middle-class, white high school students (grades 10 to 12) in California achieved an X of 12.23 and a s.d. of 4.37 on this test. That means that, on the average, they were able to generate about 12 "behaviorally different" problems in total for all 4 items in the 8 minutes allotted. However,

1. Remember: They needed only to describe a problem in one sentence and had four different situations from which to derive their responses.

2. Remember: Although current Ss had 10 minutes, their responses were more complex and they had access to only one visual depiction of a relationship.

3. Remember: Ss in this study are more representative of "people in general, ages 18 to 24" since they include Alberta College Students, Alberta Vocational Center Students, and University of Alberta students.

Scoring Criteria for Multiple Social Problems Test

I. What constitutes a scorable response?

A. Ideally, a scorable response is a one-sentence description of an interpersonal problem.

1. Some examples of "problem" descriptions are:

(a) "Sister makes fun of brother's friends."

(b) "Brother and sister compete for attention of mother."

(c) "Brother tries to dominate younger sister."

2. Although test instructions encourage Ss to include "the feelings, thoughts and attitudes of the two given people", these internal states, generally, are only implied in Ss responses.

B. Minimally, a scorable response is any statement which directly implies a problem involving the thoughts, feelings and attitudes of the two people.

1. However, the statement must be more than a one-word answer, e.g., simply writing "money" or "communication", etc., does not constitute a scorable response.

2. S's response may be stated in a nonproblem form (e.g., a question such as "How to decide who'll get to use the family car?" or a request from an imagined participant in the problem, such as "Will you please tidy up your room!") as long as the rater can rephrase the response into a specific problem between two people.

(a) "How to decide who'll use the family car?" may be rephrased as "Parents and children have trouble deciding who gets to use the family car; they both may want to at the same time, father may not trust son to handle it safely, etc." S need not directly imply a concrete problem (e.g., father does not trust son), only specify a reasonable problem area (e.g., use of the family car).

(b) "Will you please tidy up your room!" may be

rephrased as "The child doesn't keep his/her room as clean as the parent wants."

3. In any instance of a questionable response, the rater need only ask "Does this response give me enough information so I can readily see how it could be a problem?"

   (a) If the rater cannot easily imagine a concrete instance of the problem it is not a scorable response. For example, "use of the family car" readily conjures up images of a variety of concrete family disputes while "problems in communication" does not. The latter, therefore, is not a scorable response.

II. What constitutes discriminably different responses?

A. Raters are to determine the number of "behaviorally" different interpersonal problems for each S.

1. "Behaviorally" different has a unique meaning on this test. It not only refers to differences in overt behavior but includes internal states which give rise to actions, feelings, thoughts, emotions, desires, moods, and intentions.

2. To qualify as behaviorally different personal problems, a problem statement must state or imply at least one of the following conditions with respect to its comparison:

   (a) different thoughts involved

   (b) different feelings involved

   (c) different intentions involved

   (d) different overt actions or reactions involved

3. In instances of questionable differences, i.e., when responses appear to belong to the same behavioral class, raters must pay careful attention to the difference between process (how something is a problem) and the content of that problem.

   (a) Problems may be defined by a very similar process, e.g., "competitiveness" between

the two parties or an inability to make decisions, yet they may still be <u>behaviorally</u> different.

(b) It is the content of the problems which allows one to judge whether or not they involve different thoughts, feelings, desires, emotions, etc. ))L2 For example:

> A brother and sister can compete for the attention of a particular parent or for the allegiance of a specific peer.
>
> A husband and wife may disagree over which house to buy or how to spend their retirement.

In each of these cases the specific content involves very different thoughts, feelings, intentions, or actions. Thus, they are all independent interpersonal problems.

However, a parent and child may argue over how tidy to keep a room or how well one should be groomed, and in these instances the content, "tidiness", is relatively similar. Thus, these two problems are <u>not</u> considered independent interpersonal problems.

# APPENDIX D

## RICHERT'S FOCUSING RATING SCALE

You are asked to rate the questionnaire answers on a five-point rating scale described in the table below. What you are attempting to assess is whether the person who answered the questions did or did not focus on his feelings during the experiment he participated in prior to answering the questionnaire.

What is it to focus on one's feelings? It is a kind of introspection in which one attends to inner events of thought which cannot be known directly to any other person but oneself. However, focusing does not apply to as broad a spectrum of inner events as does introspection. Introspection can be of emotions, of ideas, of memories, of transient sensations. Focusing implies attention to a particular kind of inner event which is somewhat different from all of this.

The inner event which one focuses upon has been called "one's felt experiencing", and "one's implicit sense of experience". Central to all these definitions is that this inner event is felt, that it is a process, and that it is occurring at the present time. In these ways it differs from an idea, emotion, memory, or sensation, which are perceived as more static units occurring outside time, and can be looked at apart from the way they make us feel. (When we do look at the way they make us feel, we are focusing.)

Focusing seems to have four phases. The first is characterized by zeroing in on one's feelings. The second is marked by an unfolding of the feeling. Phase three of this process is a general application of this feeling to many problems and areas of life which were not directly involved in the original problem and the feeling of it. Finally, there is referent movement. This refers simply to a change in the feeling which gives rise to new words and pictures to describe this new feeling. Some examples will help to make this clearer.

I am a student, in company of a teacher for whom I have conscious feelings of great respect. I am accustomed to feeling pleasure when I am in his company -- he is so intelligent, so interested in helping me to understand, I am with him now, and I am thinking how much I admire him, how this is the sort of experience for which I came to the university, how I now know that I did the right thing. But, as I pay attention to my felt sense of what is happening between us now, I notice that I feel a little uneasy. How can this be? A barrage of thoughts continues to tell me how much I like this great teacher, what a fine man he is, and so forth, but I ignore these thoughts and concentrate on my felt sense of uneasiness. As I attend to it, it changes and sharpens into a feeling of disgust, and now I notice that I am greatly repelled by his habit of chewing tobacco while he is talking to me. In a little while I am amused by my new

feeling of repulsion toward this side of my teacher and the feeling of uneasiness is gone.

Notice from this example that the student's conscious formulations derived from past experiences with this teacher are not adequate to explain the feeling he has toward him now. Only by paying attention to what he has now, can he understand this new feeling. This paying attention is what is meant by zeroing in. As he concentrates he finds that his admiration has something of uneasiness in it. This illustrates unfolding of the felt. He finds it necessary to let much extraneous material pass at this point and zero in again on the currently felt. If he had followed up some of these thoughts he would not have been focusing but merely letting his mind wander. As he concentrates again, he finds the feeling of uneasiness sharpening and changing. The formulation "disgust" which comes out of his focusing on his present feelings is satisfactory, and it brings a further feeling of relief. This shows up referent movement. In this example general application is not illustrated. This will very often be the case with the answers you will be working with. Do not worry about it. It will be enough if you can identify whether or not the other three process steps took place.

IT IS THE ACT OF PAYING ATTENTION TO ONE'S PRESENT FEELINGS AND COMING BY A SERIES OF FELT STEPS TO A NEW, FELT TO BE MEANINGFUL FORMULATION ABOUT THEM AS A RESULT OF PAYING ATTENTION TO THEM WHICH IS THE ESSENTIAL PROCESS OF FOCUSING.

From the ten answers to the questionnaire we want you to make a judgment as to whether or not the person was focusing during the experiment he participated in prior to answering the questionnaire, and if so to what degree. The first questions asked are very general and the answers to them can only be used to get an overall idea of whether any focusing went on. The later questions refer to specific parts of the process. The higher the number of a question the later in the process is the step which it attempts to prove. The answers to these questions should be used not only to get a general picture of whether the person focused or not, but also for judging the extent to which the person was able to focus. Thus if the answers to questions early in the series indicate focusing and ones near the end do not, the person might have to be judged as focusing but only up to a point. The last question is again general. It concerns the pacing of the instructions given to the person participating in these experiments. Generally, it seems that if the person is focusing his process carries itself forward without our instructions so that he has already done what an instruction calls for by the time it is given. Sometimes too, the person will go at a rate much slower than that at which instructions are presented. This may also be an

indication of focusing. Thus if the person is out of step with the formal instructions in either direction time-wise, it can often be taken as indicating that focusing was going on. If the person is in perfect step with the instructions, then the answer to this question yields absolutely no information about whether the person was focusing or not, and it should be disregarded.

From the answers to these questions, we would like you to assign one general rating which seems to you to describe best the total focusing performance of the individual. You will find the task much easier if you read over each set of answers entirely once, and then go back and skim over it again before you attempt to assign any rating.

## Scoring

5: Means that you are sure that the subject DID COMPLETE the focusing process experiencing a shift or movement in the felt referent.

4: Means that you are sure that the subject zeroed in, that is, was able to focus on one specific topic and that unfolding occurred, but that there was no shift, no referent movement.

3: Indicates that you are sure that the subject was able to zero in, that is, to get hold and keep hold of one particular topic, but that the process did not go any farther, not even to the stage of unfolding.

2: Means that you are sure that the subject DID NOT FOCUS AT ALL.

1: Means that you absolutely cannot decide whether or not the subject focused at all. The answers to the questionnaires provide quite a lot of information about what the subject was doing during the time spent on the focusing manual, and you should not have to use this category except in very extreme cases where the subject answered all the items of the questionnaire in monosyllables.

# APPENDIX E

# THE EXPERIENCING SCALE

The general difinition for each stage is followed buy an outline of the major subcategories or criteria for each.

Stage One

The chief characteristic of this stage is that it is impersonal. In some cases the content may be intrinsically impersonal, being highly general, extremely superficial, or simply a narrative or events with no personal referent established. In other cases the speaker's involvement may be impersonal so that he reveals nothing private or tender about himself and the remarks could equally well be about a stranger or an object.

1) The content is not about the speaker. It may be a story about other people or about events in which the speaker is not involved. It can be a simple description of objects, people, or events. If the content is about ideas or concepts, these are either generalized or externalized. In each instance the speaker does nothing to make the content more personal.

2) The content is such that the speaker could be identified with it in some way, but this association is not made clear. Though the speaker may in passing refer to himself, these references do not function to establish or clarify the speaker's involvement in the content. He does not supply his attitudes, feelings, or reactions, but treats himself as another person or as an object so that the story could equally well be about another person.

3) If the first person is used, these pronouns function only to define the speaker as an object, spectator, or participant. The focus remains on the events and the speaker's role is unelaborated (e.g., as I was walking down the street, I read a book that..., I put the lid on the box..., he stepped on my toe, etc.).

4) The speaker may refer to himself but this reference is limited only to the most public or superficial aspects of his life and reveals nothing personal or private. His manner of expression would tend to be remote, matter of fact, or offhand as in superficial social chitchat, or would tend to

have a mechanical or rehearsed quality as if the remarks would be (or have been) made to anyone.

5) Occasionally stage one is rated either for a terse, unelaborated, or unexplained refusal on the part of the speaker to participate in an interaction or for a tacit avoidance of, withdrawal from or squelching of tion. Involvement is kept to an absolute minimum. While the speaker may answer direct questions tersely, he offers no spontaneous comments about himself or about the situation.

Stage Two

There is some explicit association established between the speaker and the content, either in that he is clearly the character involved in the narrative, or because the personal relevance of the content is made explicit. The speaker's involvement does not go beyond the specific content, however. All comments, associations, reactions, and remarks function to get the story across but do not refer to or define the speaker's feelings or do not establish the speaker's personal responsibility for his reactions or for what he is like in the situation.

1) The content is a narrative of events in which the speaker is obviously involved in some personal way (more than a spectator).

2) If the events narrated are impersonal, then the speaker must establish by his remarks that the content is important (e.g., expression of interest in, desire for, a given event; simple evaluations of events). These remarks simply establish that the content is personally important but make no reference to the explicit quality of this involvement.

3) The segment may contain a description of the speaker's ideas, attitudes, opinions, wishes, preferences, aspirations, talents, capacities, etc. that function to describe him from an external or peripheral perspective. These remarks remain externally anchored (in terms of other people, events or objects) and are not elaborated to include

the speaker's personal or inner reactions. The speaker thus treats his ideas, desires, etc. as if they were around him but outside of him in some way but never ties them to his inner perspective. The speaker may refer to his ideas, etc. as if they were feelings ("I feel that I am a good farmer" "I feel that people should be more considerate"), but at stage two the words "I think" could easily be substituted for "I feel" without changing the meaning in any significant way.

4) The speaker's feelings, reactions, etc. may be quite apparent or implicit, either because he may be emotionally aroused or because the content is the type that ordinarily would be of great personal significance. These feelings, however, are not referred to directly, are not differentiated from the narrative, or personally owned. Often the speaker will make his feelings or experiences very abstract, or turn them into objects or external events so that he seems to be describing them from afar or as if they were in the general situation or entirely the responsibility of another person.

5) Any self-characterizations or self-descriptions that occur at this stage are highly abstract, generalized, or intellectualized and make no clear reference to the speaker's feelings or private phenomenology.

6) If asked a direct question about his feelings, the speaker may answer (yes or no) but his responses are not elaborated or the elaborations and explorations are intellectual, external or abstract.

Stage Three

Though the speaker's focus is primarily on telling a story or describing his external situation, he goes beyond the content to make parenthetical comments about his more personal reactions and responses. These associations present some aspects of the speaker's personal perspective - his feelings at the time of or about the events or his comments about the personal significance of the situation. These associations, however, are based on or are limited to the external events or situations. They function to elaborate

the external situation, to give it a personal touch, but do not refer to anything more general or personal about the speaker.

1) The content is a narrative of events or a description of some aspect of the speaker's environment (past, present, or future) with parenthetical personal remarks added:

a) About the speaker's feelings at the time of or about the events (as opposed to a description of his actions, capacities, ideas, opinions, or moral judgments);

b) Consisting of a description of the speaker's state of mind at the time of the events, e.g., his expectations, decision-making processes, perceptions or calculations in the situation;

c) Remarks that clarify the personal significance, implications, or ramifications of the situation in some way - provided that they go beyond simply establishing that there is a significance to show what the significant features in the situation are.

2) Self descriptions are at stage three when they:

a) Are limited to descriptions of a fairly superficial aspect of the speaker's life style or role behavior;

b) Consist of remarks describing the external circumstances that explain or cause the person's behavior; and

c) Consist of remarks about how the speaker's feelings, intentions, reactions or actions might be seen or have been seen or interpreted by others (not value judgments), or about how the speaker is perceived or misperceived as a person by others (e.g., I must have seemed angry to him; he couldn't see how unhappy I was; my mother always thought I was a moody person).

These descriptions may function to characterize the speaker personally, but either this is incidental to the telling of a story, or the picture that comes across about the person is relatively external - an outside view which is only situationally or behaviorally elaborated.

3) The important feature distinguishing stage three from stage four is that the personal remarks that are made (ranging from parenthetical remarks to more extensive self descriptions) function primarily to give a rich description

of the situation with the person as a part, but do not necessarily clarify what the person is like inside. Feelings are distinct and owned but are still tied to the setting and are not described elaborately; references about personal significance are not used as a basis for wider generalizations about the self; generalizations refer to the external setting and not to the self (way it always is, not the way I always am).

Stage Four

At stage four the speaker makes self-references that are anchored internally so that he refers to, describes or reveals his personal, internal perspective (including feelings, details of his self-image, personal perceptions, expectations, motives and processes, or his feelings about himself). As a result he communicates what it is like to be him. Though a specific situation may be referred to, the speaker's personal perspective (apart from his immediate responses) is communicated so that the self and not just the specific situation is described. These internally anchored self-references do not serve as the basis for systematic self-examination.

1) If the remarks are focused on one specific situation, the self references go beyond the situation in some way either to show what the person is like more generally, or to elaborate or evaluate his reactions more personally (e.g., how they are characteristic, consistent, realistic in terms of his motives, expectations, perceptions, etc.) These self-references must be internally anchored so that in telling the story the speaker also clearly tells something more personal about himself. Externally anchored self-references, moral evaluations or references to the feelings of others are not sufficient for four unless they are explicitly personalized in internal terms.

2) The speaker tells a story completely from his personal frame of reference. By giving personal details

about his feelings, reactions, goals, assumptions, etc., in telling a story he gives a clear and personally rich picture of what it was like to be him at that particular moment.

3) The speaker may (without starting from a situation) describe or talk in general about his feelings, assumptions, motives, goals and perceptions, etc., in order to tell what 'it' is like for him to be in that particular state or to have the particular image or characteristic he is talking about. By revealing these internal parts of himself the speaker gives a fairly detailed picture of one or more of his states of being without making any systematic efforts to examine or analyze the material that is presented.

4) The speaker presents his self-picture, his self-image, either in terms of his own private feelings, assumptions, evaluations and perceptions about himself, or in terms of his general expectations, motives, feelings, etc. The content must be more personal than a more account of his behavior, actions, attitudes, values or thoughts (outside view of him). Superficial or external self-characterizations must be elaborated in some inwardly anchored way so that their personal significance is made clear.

5) The speaker may refer to the fact that he is aware (or in possession of) a private self or inner process but experience considerable difficulty in communicating these. In such cases these expressions of difficulty (or appeals for help in communication) are sufficient for four provided that the speaker goes beyond the simple and vague or abstract acknowledgment of a self to actively seek self-revelation in some way.

Stage Five

At stage five the speaker is engaged in the purposeful exploration or elaboration of his feelings. There are two components to this process. The speaker must pose or define a problem or proposition about his feelings or inner self, and he must explore or elaborate it in some personal way. The problem or proposition may be oriented to a consideration of the specific content, sequence or quality of feelings, the situational or causal antecedents of

feelings or the relationship among feelings and/or other internal processes. The exploration or elaboration must be related to the problem or proposition, must contain some inner referents and must have the function of expanding or clarifying the speaker's awareness of what he is like inside.

1) A stage five problem proposition, of hypothesis about self must be primarily oriented to the speaker's feelings, reactions or assumptions basic to the self image. It can be defined in different ways:

a) a feeling, reaction or inner process or even a mode of behavior can either be defined as problematic in and of itself (e.g., as a conflict with other feelings, or aspects of the self) or can be hypothesized to characterize the self

b) in terms of the detailed nature and quality of a given feeling or internal process, including its situational antecedents or its place in a temporal sequence of feelings and inner events;

c) in terms of the personal implications, relationships, and inner ramifications of a feeling (e.g., how it is expressed, what its implications or personal significance is);

d) in terms of the comparison of feelings, reactions or internal processes and/or a comparison of their situational antecedents.

2) All problems or propositions about the self must be expanded or elaborated with inner referents:

a) to provide examples or illustrations of how the problem or proposition exists or operates within different settings or at different times (including a fully elaborated restatement);

b) to relate the problem or proposition to other internal processes, reactions or events including its situational or temporal antecedents;

c) to establish hypotheses, speculations, or analogies about the nature or inner implications of the central problem or process.

3) Both 1 (definition of problem or proposition) and 2

(exploration or elaboration) must be present for stage five to rated. If the problem or proposition is very strong or clear, then it is not essential that elaboration be completely internal or extensive, provided it contains occasional inner referents. If the internal anchorage of the problem is weaker (e.g., as in speculations about the situational antecedents of feelings or about the quality or temporal sequence of feelings) then the exploration or elaboration must be inwardly anchored so that it is clear that the speaker's focus is on expanding his inner awareness rather than on understanding his external situation or on justifying his behavior, attitudes, and reactions.

Stage Six

The speaker is clearly using his feelings as the immediate source of some of what he discovers about how he works inside. He now uses what he can feel directly, in order to clarify the relationship(s) among his feelings, the causes for, or personal implications of his feelings, or the ramifications or significance of his feelings, for other aspects of himself (e.g., his self image, assumptions, perceptions, motives, etc.). In each case now ongoing feelings or inner processes form the integral part of any of his conclusions. What he says sometimes goes beyond pure description and is internally derived from his now ongoing inner workings. He may talk about the past, but what he discovers emerges from what he feels now.

1) The content may be a detailed emergence of the nature of the relationship between two feelings (causal relationships, how they may conflict, how they may compliment each other, etc.). More than the simple temporal or sequential relationship must be established. The workings, the how or why of the relationship or sequence must be apparent and described in immediately discovered internal terms.

2) The content may be a detailed description of a

freshly emergent realtionship between one feeling and other inner processes, which clarifies the nature of their association. This will function as an interpretation of inner ways. Any interpretation of actions, attitudes, that are anchored internally are not clearly six unless they are elaborated inwardly in working on the inner processes going on at this time, as the internal components of the connection are now becoming clear (e.g., it now seems to me that...that was a hostile act, I felt inferior, I saw him as criticizing me and I wanted to get back.).

3) The segment may maintain a detailed description of the causal relationship between feelings and situations with detailed elaboration of now felt inner events that are part of the causal link.

4) It may take a detailed description of the relationship between self picture and any clearly defined internal processes, feelings or actions provided that these details are now ongoing steps of immediately felt process.

5) The content may be a detailed comparison of inner processes and more external or superficial aspects of the self, in which the relationship of the "outside" to the presently felt "inner" workings is made very clear.

6) Any fully expanded use of an analogy, metaphor, or aphorism that refers to inner processes is six provided it is clear that these are being used not just to describe the quality of feelings in general, but to communicate how the presently felt feelings are at work in the moment.

7) If changes in the self, feelings, or inner processes are being described these must be elaborated to show how they are changing in the present moment, how the differences now feel, and what new, personal implications seem to arise from these immediately felt changes.

8) The speaker's positive or negative response to the interviewer's formulations are not six unless they acknowledge or deny an immediately felt relation to the now ongoing inner process.

9) There are specific indications that at least one new, important experiential event has occurred, though not necessarily within the moment-recorded. There may be a momentary "aha" experience: something hitherto vague may suddenly "open up" so that many of its details come into view. The detail will not be simply intellectual detail, but will arise out of, and suddenly clarify the hitherto vague "something" that the client had "felt" without being able to express it. Or the client may indicate, in any of many different ways, that he is able to "be himself" or act or exist or feel in a way that he is seldom or never able. Or

finally, the client may indicate that a particular feeling has come or gone without the help of, or inspite of, his deliberate intentions. Such occurrence, however, must always take place in the context of self-exploration, and be seen as somehow significant to such exploration: the client must attempt to make use of them for further self-understanding.

Stage Seven

At stage seven the speaker communicates full awareness of his immediately present inner feelings and internal processes. He moves from one inner referent to another, altering and modifying his conceptions of himself, his feelings, thoughts or actions, as new, immediately felt nuances occur in the present experiential moment. In contrast at all previous stages, there is now definite evidence that the process of self exploration is carried forward by momentary experiential events that function as sprint-boards for further exploration.

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